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No. 349.

LOVE'S ART.

BY JOHN GOSS.

I wrote her name on parchment white,
And hid it from the common stare;
Next morn I sought it, but my sight
Revealed no sign of writing there.

The wondrous magic of Love's pen—
The magic that discards man's art—
Had wrought; and when I looked again
I saw her name deep in my heart!

Rifle and Tomahawk:

ON,
NED WYLDE, THE BOY SCOUT.

A Romance of the Sioux War.

BY "TEXAS JACK."
(J. B. OMORUNDRO.)

CHAPTER IV.

THE ROSE OF THE ROSEBUD.

Some three leagues away from the scenes presented in the foregoing chapters, a well-timbered gorge led up into the mountains, its sides broken here and there by huge masses of rocks that rose in jutting peaks, forming a wild and picturesque expanse of scenery—a fitting home for the red children of the forests, whose nature were scarcely less wild than their surroundings.

Near the mouth of this canon, almost concealed by the shadows of the tree under which she stood, a girl, clad in Indian costume, was as motionless as a statue, evidently awaiting the coming of some expected person.

For perhaps an hour she had remained there, in that mute, thoughtful attitude, solitary and alone.

The sound of a light footfall broke at length upon her listening ears, and she turned with eager expectancy, to behold emerge from the gloom a tall, jaunty-looking warrior, who the next instant stood by her side.

That this was not the person expected could be seen at a glance, for the young girl started, a frown swept over her face, and she stepped quickly backward, as though about to fly; but a moment after she halted and stood firm, a bold, beautiful woman, with defiant manner and flashing eyes.

"The Rose of the Rosebud is alone on the mountain; does she wait for the Long Bow, or shall the Biting Wolf cheer her breast?" and the warrior spoke in a low, not unusual voice.

"The Rose of the Rosebud cares not to see the Long Bow or the Biting Wolf; both are brave warriors; but her heart beats slow in their presence.

"She came from her tepee to be alone, for her soul is sad with the dreams of blood; the birds trill sadly in the forests, and the moon and the sun but light up the war-path through mountain and prairie."

"The Rose is not here to meet the Long Bow, then?" resumed the warrior, as if determined upon a certain object.

"Biting Wolf, my tongue is not crooked," replied the maiden, with spirit.

"The Biting Wolf would speak to the Rose of the Rosebud; he has many things to whisper under his blanket."

"The Sitting Bull and the Crazy Horse are on the war-path, and the Black Moon has already reddened his scalping-knife with the blood of the pale-faces; soon, all of the young braves are to join them, and ere the Biting Wolf would go, he tells to the Rose his love; he would place her in his tepee to gladden his heart when he comes back from the red trail."

"Yes, the trail will be red—the wail of the women will mingle with the howl of the wolf over the dead."

"The Sioux will take many scalps, but the end of the trail will lead our nation to death; the Sioux graves will dot every hillside and prairie."

"Bah! the Rose of the Rosebud talks like a papoose; she forgets that the pale-faces have robbed us of our hunting-grounds, have trampled upon the graves of our fathers; she forgets that we shiver and starve, and that we must seek the red blood from the pale-face heart."

"The Biting Wolf forgets that the pale-faces are like the leaves on the trees. Let his voice be for peace, for he is a great warrior and should know that the Sioux must fly before our foes like the buffalo before the prairie-fire."

Biting Wolf listened in patience, thinking more of the rippling sweetness of the maiden's voice, than of what she said.

After a pause of a moment the Rose of the Rosebud again asked her companion to leave her alone, and with a look of regret he turned away, and she was again by herself; but no longer did she stand like a statue, gazing out upon the plain, lying white and open in the moonlight, for she seemed impatient, turned restlessly about, and now and then stamped her tiny, moccasined foot with an angry gesture.

Suddenly she started visibly; for a tall form, without a moment's warning, stood by her side.

It was a huge, brawny warrior, in all his war-paint and feathers—his face stern, his arms folded across his red breast.

"The Rose of the Rosebud leaves her tepee



"I will halt and fire—then I will be certain," cried the boy, and he was drawing rein, when—

to walk in the moonlight with the Biting Wolf," he said, in a low, savage tone.

"The Rose came alone, to be alone; the Biting Wolf met her, and when she told him to leave her he walked away; will the Long Bow do as much?"

"The Long Bow is a great brave; he is ready to go upon the war-path with the Sitting Bull when the moon is gone; but, before he goes, he would ask the Rose to be his bride; he would rather have her in his tepee than many pale-face scalps on his lodge-pole.

"The Biting Wolf is a coward; he would not kill a sick buffalo; but the Long Bow is a great warrior."

"The Rose smiles on the heart of the Biting Wolf."

"No, she has no heart for the Biting Wolf—she has less for the Long Bow."

"The blood of the pale-faces runs in the veins of the Rose, for her heart is double, her tongue is crooked; but she shall never enter the tepee of the Biting Wolf—she shall die first" and the warrior hissed forth his words with a venom of jealous rage that startled the maiden, and she turned, as if about to fly.

But he seized her arm, and drew from his belt his tomahawk.

There was danger in the savage; his jealous love had driven him mad for the moment.

But the Rose did not tremble under the peril, but looked with scorn into the warrior's face, while she lifted her disengaged hand with a warning gesture.

The daughter of the Medicine Queen has no fear of Long Bow; he is a coward to threaten a woman; let him remember that the Rose of the Rosebud once saved the life of the Crazy Horse; if harm befalls the Rose he will not forget, but hunt the Long Bow to his grave."

"The Long Bow knows no fear; the Rose of the Rosebud does not love him—he must die."

With a strong, quick motion he drew her toward him, and the tomahawk whirled in air, while a shriek burst from the maiden's lips.

But the tomahawk did not descend, as many painted yellows, and as many painted warriors sprung into the open space.

But the Long Bow was not to be thwarted, with an answering yell, he seized the maiden in his powerful arms, and bounded away with the speed of a deer.

The form of Long Bow was herculean, his strength gigantic, his speed of foot wonderful, so that, burdened as he was, he kept ahead of the braves in hot pursuit.

But gradually his pace, and the weight he bore, began to tell upon even his giant frame, and slowly his pursuers drew nearer, until at length, like a wolf caught in a trap, he turned at bay upon the very brink of a high precipice.

In the wondrously bright moonlight he stood revealed, holding the maiden with both arms high above his head, with the evident intention of hurling her down to death from the dizzy height.

With wild yells the warriors rushed forward in a vain effort to save her. The savage nature was maddened, and the huge chief swung the graceful form of the maiden out into fearful space, while a shriek of despair burst from her pallid lips.

CHAPTER V.

OLD SOLITARY ON HIS MUSCLE.

In the shadow of the gorge, overhanging by the precipice upon which stood the huge chief

Long Bow, and his intended victim, were encamped two soldiers and a Crow Indian—scouts from the command of General Crook, whose force was not many leagues distant.

Well aware of their close vicinity to an Indian encampment, the three men were concealed in the brush at the base of the opposite side of the gorge, waiting for something to turn up in the way of news, with which they might return to their commander.

Worn out with fatigue, the two soldiers slept, while the untiring Crow kept watch.

Suddenly a burst of wild yells put the three on the alert, and a few moments after they came before their vision the tall form of Long Bow, carrying in his arms a human form.

Started by the sudden apparition, they looked upward in doubt as to the purpose of the Sioux, who stood plainly relieved against the moonlit sky; but when they saw him, with a wave of his powerful arms, swing the human freight he bore above his head, one of the soldiers threw his rifle to his shoulder and fired with the rapidity of thought, for he saw that it was a woman in the power of the savage warrior.

The ball fell below its mark, even as did a shot fired the next second by the Crow Indian.

Then, just as the Rose of the Rosebud swung off into space, they saw her fly in mid-air suddenly checked by some mysterious cause, and with surprise almost amounting to superstitious terror, they beheld her swing backward, and disappear in the shadow of the trees that grew near the brink of the precipice.

But they could not see the baffled, wondering look upon the face of Long Bow, who stood, almost stupefied with amazement, staring around to solve the inexplicable mystery.

It was only for an instant that the thwarted warrior stood in doubt that was allied to terror.

Recovering his self-possession, he turned and dashed back into the gloom of the timber, determined to discover, if possible, the manner of the strange rescue.

He did not count upon the fact that his pursuers were now almost upon him, until an arrow came whirring over his head.

Then he saw their numbers and knew that the moment for a desperate conflict had come.

For a second he seemed as if about to face the band of braves, and meet them single-handed; but another thought caused him to bound away in rapid flight, for he felt that nothing was to be gained by a fight on the cliff—everything was to be lost.

The approaching Sioux found the Rose at the foot of a huge tree, whose branches jutted boldly outward toward the cliff.

She seemed somewhat bruised, and more shaken, but she was not seriously hurt.

The method of her escape was a mystery to them, and the girl did not attempt to explain it.

Among the Sioux was Biting Wolf, and he ordered his braves in pursuit of the flying Long Bow, while he remained to aid the frightened girl back to her tepee in the village, a league away.

As the chief and the maiden left the cliff, and the scene was once more in the calm quietude of night, a dark form came stealing cautiously down from amid the branches of the large tree, at the foot of which the Sioux had found the Rose of the Rosebud.

As he struck the ground he gave a low chuckle of satisfaction, and began to deliberately coil a long horse-hair lasso.

Having looped it to his satisfaction, he fastened the coil into his belt and muttered forth:

"That's it, fast, last an' all ther time. Old Solitary ar' allers than—he ar' a rip-roarin' ole catamount, he ar', an' a tough big hoss on wheels."

"Cud 'a' tuk in ther red-skin cuss slick as er' whistle, of it hadn't a-bin for the racket."

" Didn't know, altogether, ef it 'd make me popper with them rods, of they'd heerd my rifle a-speakin' hereabouts, they'd 'a' nosed me out, shure-pop."

" But I threwed ther lariat party, you bet! How ther gal looked when she comed swingin' back frum purgatory, for she'd 'a' gone that sartin, if I'd noosed her slick—an' Lord luv us all, and ther devil take the hindmost, but how ther red did look! He's skeered to death, you bet!"

" But them reds ain't so smart as they bout be, fur they didn't nose out who did that shootin'—p'raps they didn't hear it, kase it was down yender in the gorge."

" Wall, I heerd it, an' I seed the glitter o' brass buttons, or I'm a liar, they's as turned a set o' tools as I is, to cum this near to an Indian camp."

" But this ain't a-gwine to do—no, nary skoot."

" It was certainly high time for the scout, for his appearance proved him to be, to either re-ascend the tree or leave the spot, for the Sioux were returning from the pursuit of Long Bow—nay, they were already near at hand.

The man gave a searching glance around him, and flitted away into the thick darkness of the timber on the mountain-side.

As he glided, rather than walked, along, he muttered to himself:

" It's just ther same, white-skin, nigger, red, wharver yer find 'em, ther 'pears to be a woman 'mongst 'em, a-shakin' up the durndest kiad o' a row, an' ther wust of it ar, Old Solitary ar' just as bad as enny on 'em."

" Great grizzlies! my heart 'peared to be a-tryin' to git out o' my skin, when I see that redriz that purty gal up to throw her overboard; you bet I couldn't stand it, to see the perrt-lookin' squaw-gal go under, an' so I just ist in the row, an' if I'd a' got my ha'rriz, I'd only myself to blame."

" El' had bin my pard, now, he'd a' let her went, you bet, and p'raps I'd better done the same, for, ef that gal's ars, an' ther durned red-skins strike my trail, why I just git my ha'r out an' no charge; 'twill be done for love, you bet."

" But she seemed like a 'mazin' nice gal fur a woman, she did, fur weemen folks are the devil ar' no mistake, kase don't they raise all ther rows that isriz?"

" Yet the gal 'beyed me nice, you bet, when I perched down to unlet go my lasso-rope from 'round her waist, an' that was her best friend.

" She did as I axed her, an' no questions axed nuther; but then she mouten blabbed me, an' mout blab yit; that ain't nothin' whole-souled in the Sioux Ingin nowh."

" Wall, I'll not strike the trail o' them durned fools who fired the shots at ther Ingin. I'll just look up my pard, an' then we'll see what they is doin' heur so far from home. Ther's more trouble a-brewin', you bet, an' I'll just look up my pard."

The scout crept cautiously on in the darkness, with a skill and noiselessness that proved him a master of woodcraft.

When he had traveled a mile up the crest of the ravine, he came to where the trees were quite thin, and grew close to the brink of a perpendicular chasm.

As he sped along, he felt conscious that he was nearing the scene of a deadly conflict, for there came to his ears the sound of combat.

" Pard's struck lie, you bet," he whispered, and then dashed forward, revolver and knife in hand.

Before him, upon the brink of the canyon's wall, three men were knit together in a battle for life.

At a glance he saw that one was the man he had referred to as his "pard," and the same glance proved to him that the other two were Sioux—and it seemed to him that one of them was the identical Indian from whom he had rescued the Rose of the Rosebud.

Who the other was he had no time to guess—perhaps one of the pursuers of Long Bow, who had joined forces in an attack upon the white man, upon whom they had accidentally stumbled.

Long Bow and the pale-face were firmly clenched together, and their movements were so quick and vigorous that the second Sioux had no opportunity to use his knife, while he clung to the white man.

So engrossed were all three in their deadly work that they failed to notice the approach of the man who called himself Old Solitary.

But, as they struggled on the very brink of the precipice, they were quickly made aware of his existence, for he sprung forward and seized the foot of the white man with an iron grasp of his left hand, while he raised his revolver in his right and fired full in the face of one of the Sioux.

Instantly, with a death-cry, the Indian threw himself backward, clutching harder in his agony the enemy he held, and over the fatal brink went the three.

Then came a sudden wrench, as the scout's grasp upon his comrade's foot was felt; but the hold was not sufficient, yet it had its effect, for the red-skin who had received the shot was jerked loose from his grasp upon the white man, and clutching again in blind death-agony seized hold of the other Sioux, and together the three went down, leaving the scout flat on his back, his companion's moccasin in his clenched hand.

CHAPTER VI.

MAKING TRACKS.

We will now

to beat up their game, for they felt that he could not be far away.

Once or twice a grim warrior rode within a few yards of the boy, but as keen as was his eye, he failed to detect the crouching figure, though he leaped his steed over the ravine.

Perhaps he recalled the deadly aim and wonderful rifle, and did not care to alone meet his formidable foe.

Then he rode away, and Ned Wynde breathed more easily.

But only for an instant, as another fiercely-painted savage soon came up, and peered closely upon the ground before and upon either side of him.

Nearer and nearer he came, and discovering the ravine, he sprang from his pony, and with the lariat over his arm, jumped down into the shallow gulch.

As he did so, a little form arose before him, a grasp of savage tenacity was upon his throat, and a keen knife glittered in the moonlight.

Then followed the crushing, tearing sound of steel going into flesh and bone, and the knife of the boy was driven to the hilt in the brazen heart of the Sioux.

With a gurgling sound in his throat, a smothered groan from his lips, the Indian sunk down at the boy's feet—a dead man.

Glancing his eyes searchingly over the prairie, Ned Wynde saw that the spot where he now was, was completely surrounded by Indians, and a bright thought flashed through his busy brain.

In the twinkling of an eye he dislodged the Sioux warrior of his scanty attire, and feeling in the pouch worn at the belt of the savage, drew out a quantity of paint, with which he quickly besmeared himself.

Then he dressed himself up *à la Sioux*, and laughed lightly as he thought what a brave he made.

The body of the warrior was then huddled down into the lowest part of the gulch, the lariat removed from his wrist, and a moment after, the boy was astride of the Indian's pony, that had been so unexpectedly furnished him.

For a while Ned Wynde thought that the pony was going to give him trouble, as he did not seem to like the change of masters; but he soon quieted him down, and began to move out over the prairie.

With head bent down, as though closely on the search, the disguised boy roamed hither and thither, gradually edging toward the outer circle of warriors, and when addressed by any near at hand, replying in a disagreeable kind of grunt.

It was a trying ordeal for the boy to pass through; but he stood it bravely, and chuckled to himself, as he found that he had the open prairie before him.

Just at that moment a wild yell was heard, in the direction of the ravine, and as all the warriors rushed toward a common center, doubtless believing the boy had been captured, that fearless youth skinned away over the prairie, as fast as the nimble legs of his little pony could carry him.

Before him was a hope for life—behind him was certain death.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 348.)

SLUMBER SWEETLY.

BY COL. FRENCHY.

Slumber sweetly, little darling;
Put your pretty doll to rest—
Climb into your mother's bosom—
Lay your head on her shoulder;
Gently close your tender blue eyes,
Dream as only child can dream,
For your life just in its blooming
Is the sunshine's early beam.

Slumber sweetly, precious darling,
While your heart is free from care—
All too soon you will awaken
In life's strife to take your share.
Slumber sweetly, take this easy—
Slumber sweetly, take this easy—
Let the future bring its trouble—
For the present all is peace!

BIG GEORGE,

The Giant of the Gulch: OR, THE FIVE OUTLAW BROTHERS.

BY JOSEPH E. BADGER, JR.
AUTHOR OF "LITTLE VOLCANO, THE BOY MINER," "OLD HULL'S-EYE," "PACIFIC PETE," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOT WORK!

RED PEPPER was not in an enviable state of mind as he left the box and passed down stairs. He looked fully as ugly as he felt. He cursed the mad passion of Big George for the "dough-faced baby," to which all this trouble and uneasiness might be attributed; he cursed Estelle for not answering his message in person, thus putting an end to all trouble; he cursed Little Pepper for his obstinacy for not agreeing to postpone his "bit of amusement" until a more opportune moment; and capped the climax by cursing everybody and everything collectively and, in general, as he pressed his passage through the densely crowded aisle toward the side-door above which gleamed the faceted legend:

"FOLLOW YOUR NOSE TO THE BAR!"

There was little unnecessary resistance to his passage. Rough and ready as most of the diggers were to draw knife or cock pistol—to "fight at the drop of a hat"—none among the jostled ones seemed eager to avenge the affront. Not only had Red Pepper repeatedly proved his prowess as fire-eater, but, hunted by coyotes, the desperado family always hunted in packs. No one cared to start the cause, good though it was. Few men care to twist the rope that is to hang them, knowingly.

Chafed though he was, Red Pepper still had self-control enough to confine his aggressions to curses and a few necessary digs with his elbows whenever the crowd was unusually dense. Though nothing would have been more welcome than a scrummage, just then, it might prove fatal to his hopes of yet entrapping the woman, and loyalty to Big George held his passions in check.

Reaching the door, he passed through a dark and littered room, full of angles and nooks, into the noisy bar-room. His appearance created quite a sensation. Every voice was stilled as if by magic, every eye was turned upon him, some half-defiantly, others with an uneasy look which spoke plainer than words.

Red Pepper grunted; all the more disagreeably from its being forced. He knew that the party had been conversing about him or his brothers when his entrance interrupted them; possibly of the clever manner in which the young gymnast had foiled his attack, the night of the dance. At any other time he would

have asked for nothing better; there would have been brave matter for the gossip, fresh food for the flourishing grave-yard on Cimarron Hill.

Instead, Red Pepper passed up to the end of the bar nearest the wall, thus guarding his rear. Leaning against the counter, one hand resting upon his hip in close proximity to his revolver, the giant insolently scrutinized the group, finally uttering:

"You fellers slide up yere and drink 'long of a man, Tom," turning toward the bar-keeper. "Tom, you bear-eyed, yo-necked, cat-hammed, mutton-headed, flat-eared, crooked-shanked, long-legged son of a hop-toad you! sling out your pizen—lively, than!"

The insulting invitation or rather command to drink was complied with, such was the force of the desperado's reputation. The miners drank in seeming amity with the man whose tongue they longed, yet feared, to tear.

"Now you fellers kin go on with your talk," grinned Red Pepper, "which you dropped when I came in. Don't be bashful." Then turning to the bar, he paid for the drinks, adding: "Give me one 'o them tickets. I'm goin' in to see the gals."

A placard posted at the bar, read—"No admittance behind the scenes without a pass signed by the manager. Price five dollars."

"The world's comin' to a' end when he buys tickets!" muttered Green Persimmons, whose puckered visage had earned the *sobriquet*. "They's music in the air—you hear me?"

But this sagacious prophecy was uttered too low for the giant's ears, as he left the bar-room and paused while the doorkeeper unlocked the door leading behind the scenes. A loud burst of music caused Red Pepper to pause.

He knew that George Mack had come upon the stage, and that he would have little spare time, unless, which was very unlikely, Little Pepper would allow his victim to escape him after all.

Red Pepper had formed no plans. So far he had acted solely on impulse. If he could only find the woman! Once face to face, it would go hard but he would succeed, even though he had to fight his way out to the horses.

He knew nothing of the lay of the ground beyond, nor did he stop to consider how he was to leave the building with his prey, in case he should make Estelle captive. The half-giant had no cool plotter.

He hurried into a dark, narrow passage, pressing doggedly on. Fortune favored him in this. The passage led to the green-room, as the dim light soon assured him. Just beneath the smoking lamp were the words, "WINE-ROOM." And, peering through the half-opened door, he caught a glimpse of two persons seated at one of the tables. An evil glow filled his eyes as he recognized the woman he sought. But—her companion? It was the doctor—C. F. Parmiter—otherwise Little Cassino. An ugly suspicion flashed through the desperado's mind.

"Him an' her! Ef he's been playin' bugs onto us!"

The two were evidently on good terms—even confidential. Red Pepper grew hot as he remembered the unexplained noise that had interrupted Big George while giving them their instructions. If the doctor had eavesdropped them, and then carried Estelle the information—that would explain why she had not fallen into the cunningly baited trap. Grating his teeth, Red Pepper grasped the butt of a revolver. But he did not use it, just then.

Then came the shrill yell as Little Pepper flung his knife and severed the trapeze rope, closely followed by the heavy thud as the luckless gymnast was hauled down, head-first, to the bare, hard floor of the aisle, cleared by the horror-stricken spectators not a moment too soon to save their own proctos carcasses, at the expense of George Mack's. Then came a moment of breathless silence.

Little Cassino and Estelle sprung to their feet, the latter pale and palpitating. One brief moment of horrible doubt—then the dread truth flashed upon her mind as loud cries came from the theater.

"George—merciful God! he has fallen!" burst from her lips, as she sprung around the table.

"Wait!" cried Little Cassino, catching her arm. "Let me go first—there may be some trick in this."

"He has fallen—let me go! he may be dead—dying—and I not there—let me go!" gasped the woman, struggling to free herself.

"Look to her, girls!" cried the doctor, to the terrified ballet girls, who, womanlike, flocked around the nearest man at the first alarm. "Keep her here until I get back—ha! look out!" he added as the table was overturned and the light extinguished by its fall.

Freeing Estelle, he darted to the door, but Red Pepper met him at the entrance, pistol in hand. Only for a defective cap, the thread of Little Cassino's life would have been cut short then and there. With a furious curse at his failure, Red Pepper shifted his grasp and dealt the doctor a crushing blow upon the head, felling him like a log. Then, with a howl of joy, he spurned the quivering body with his foot, and rushed into the room, seizing Estelle in his arms, holding her easily as a child, despite her desperate struggles to escape.

"Hold your hush!" he snarled, furiously, as she shrieked aloud in agony of mind, being kept from the side of her suffering or dead husband. "Hold your yaup, or I'll wring your neck like a chicken!"

Brutally compressing her throat, he stifled her screams while tearing the shawl from her shoulders and enveloping her head with it.

Then, knowing that the alarm must have been given, he rushed to the door, cocking a revolver. But the struggles of Estelle still bothered him, and in the semi-darkness, he stumbled over the prostrate doctor, falling heavily, at full length, the shock knocking down the lamp, which was shattered upon his head, the oil and bits of glass half blinding him.

Freeing from his arms, Estelle scrambled to her feet, screaming loudly, in concert with the ballet-girls. Cursing furiously, Red Pepper sprang up, the shawl still in his hands, and after a brief chase succeeded in catching his prey, this time dealing with her in a still more summary manner.

One heavy blow upon the head effectually silenced her screams and struggles. Flinging the limp, nerveless figure upon his shoulder, holding his pistol ready for instant use in case necessity demanded it, the ruffian hastened along the dark passageway. There he paused, with an oath.

The alarm had been given, though for a time it had been overpowered by the tumult beyond; yet not one minute had elapsed since the first alarm, so rapidly had the different changes occurred. But now, shouts of a far different cadence came from the stage and the barroom. The shrieks of the terrified women had been heard, and aid was approaching.

Matters looked dark for Red Pepper, yet he never flinched, nor for one moment did it occur to him to abandon his prey and secure his

own escape, as he could easily have done, by mingling with the crowd. He was a true bulldog.

Standing in one corner, he waited as the men came rushing on. The darkness favored him beyond his hopes. Ben Coffee and half a dozen others passed him, and the way of escape seemed free. Red Pepper darted forward, with clenched teeth. He reached the door in safety: Two paths lay open before him. The bar-room was one. The other, longer, led to a side-door, opening upon the alley. Along the latter passage he pressed. But the momentary hesitation proved disastrous. A loud yell told that he was discovered. He turned, snarling. The tall bartender was raising a revolver, with a fierce look.

"I'll kill his poor wife—you knew he was married! I wonder where she is—I haven't seen her!"

"You don't know, then?" quickly interrupted Little Cassino, looking up. "She's gone—stolen away by that devil, Red Pepper!"

"That does settle it!" gasped Coffee, muting the action to the words, and squatting upon the stage in a crumpled heap of utter disgust. "I won't kick no more. You fellers kin git the hearse ready soon's you like—I don't want to breathe any longer."

His words were unheeded. At that moment the injured man moaned feebly, and quivered as he vainly strove to lift his head.

"Easy, lad," soothingly uttered the doctor.

"Take it cool," he said. "I had a little accident, that's all. You'll be all right, pretty soon."

"Estelle—where are you? I can't—can't see—"

"She'll be here in a moment—don't worry—take it as easy as you can," added the doctor, a queer sensation in his throat.

If heard, his words were not heeded. The poor head rolled feebly from side to side, the glazing eyes moved restlessly as though seeking for the dear face they would never again behold in life—his feeble voice faintly whispered the loved name—Estelle, nothing but Estelle.

None knew better than the doctor how vain all human skill was—that the dread flat had gone forth that the young gymnast was dying. And knowing this, he thought only of soothing the poor fellow's last moments. Motioning Cotton-top to take his place, and showing him how to support his head, he pulled Ben Coffee aside.

"Wake up, old man—don't be a fool! Hunt up some of the girls—bring one here. A steady, cool-headed one, if you can. Lively, now—don't you see the man is dying?"

Thus spurred, Coffee obeyed, returning in a few moments with a middle-aged woman. To her Little Cassino spoke, in a low, earnest tone:

"You hear him—calling for his wife? She cannot come—you must take her here. Wait—it is nothing so dreadful. He is blind—dying. He cannot see—he never will know the difference. It is a pious fraud, for he will die happy. You are strong enough for that? You mustn't speak—only let him hold your hand and think you are his wife."

"I will do it—never fear me, sir," was the subdued reply, as she moved forward and knelt beside the dying man.

"Estelle—my wife—I thought you would never—come!" whispered the gymnast, his face calming as though by magic.

The touch of her hand seemed to infuse new life into his veins. His voice grew clearer and stronger. His words came easier.

"I am dying, little one—don't cry. The best of friends must part—and God is good: He will let us meet again, never fear. I wish I could stay with you longer—always. Life has been very sweet since I knew you. Ah! there is something rising and choking me—I can hardly breathe! But listen—I must speak quick. This is a bad place for such as you. You must leave it—this life, I mean. The old man will give you my salary—that will take you to my people. Promise me you will go!"

"She will—I give you my word, friend," interrupted Little Cassino.

"Doctor—thank God! you are here! Give me your hand—and, little one, yours. There!" he added, joining their hands. "I leave you in your care, doctor. You have—proved a friend to us both. Estelle, wife, trust him; he will not fail you. Doctor, as you deal with her, so may—God deal with you!"

"I accept the trust," solemnly uttered Little Cassino. "If I fail her—my wife—may God desert me in my hour of need—amen!"

A faint sigh of intense relief, then George Mack lay quiet, like one dead, save for his labored breathing. For several moments thus—he suddenly sat up, a wild light in his face.

"Estelle—my wife—God of mercy protect her! save her from that—oh—hold me! I am falling—falling—!"

A burst of blood checked his utterance. One convulsive shudder, then his head heavily back.

The young gymnast was dead.

A worn and faded flag covered the dead. The stage was cleared. Men stood around in little knots, conversing in whispers. But then the oppressive silence was broken by a loud cry from old Bart Noble.

"Look yander! see that knife—that's a clue for ye!"

All eyes were turned upward; following the direction of his outstretched finger, the men saw a broad-bladed knife sticking between two of the boxes, its point deep buried in the soft pine. A wild yell arose as they read the truth.

"Hold!" shrilly cried Little Cassino, his voice a harsh cry as though by magic. "One hasty move may destroy all. Let us make sure of each step as we go along. Who among you saw the knife thrown?"

No one replied. Though a hasty examination had shown them that the fatal blow had been half severed, until Bart Noble's discovery not one had even suspected that the devilish deed had transpired before their very eyes.

"Was the trapeze in motion, or stationary, when the rope broke?"

To this question there was but one answer. The ropes were still.

"That number will be sufficient, sir."

"I will at once give the order. In the meantime go into the other room, and Ruth will give you some breakfast."

Gladly the Prairie Pilot obeyed the last order.

Again meeting Ruth gave him a good appetite for his meal, served as it was by the fairy fingers of the lovely maiden.

An hour after the squadron rode from the fort, Captain Ashland and Prairie Pilot galloping side by side, at the delight of all, for the officers and men were rejoiced to see the scout once more in favor at head-quarters.

Leaving a proper force to garrison the place and secure the horses, stock, and booty of the outlaws, also to look after the wounded, Captain Ashland at once started upon his return with the bandit prisoners, guarded by some twenty troopers.

Returning with him was Prairie Pilot, who carried a large tin box which he had taken from the cabin of the old Hermit Chief.

CHAPTER XXV.

PRAIRIE PILOT'S STORY.

In the cabin home of Prairie Pilot, the second evening after the fall of the outlaw stronghold, were gathered several persons, bending over a form reclining upon the scout's rude cot.

The recumbent figure was the old Hermit Chief, and his face was pallid, his brow damp with the approach of death, for an ugly wound in his side was dripping out his sands of life.

Bending over him were Bravo Bob, Scalp-lock Dave, Yankee Sam, Captain Ralph and Ione—the two latter with pale, saddened faces.

"Yes, you have done for me; I have not long to live, and your cursed bullet has ruined my every dream of the future," groaned the Hermit Chief, turning his burning eyes upon Yankee Sam, who replied:

"I'm sorry, pard, durned if I ain't; but yer was about makin' tracks, yer know, so I let ye have the contents of ole Heart-seeker, an' she's a weepin' as don't say fail, often. I'm as sorry as the 't' wur my own mother-in-law, durned if I ain't."

"Well, as you have given me my death-wound, curse you, go to the fort and tell Colonel Radcliff I would see him; and quick, or it will be too late."

Yankee Sam started quickly to obey, but at the door started back, for on the threshold stood Prairie Pilot, Colonel Radcliff, Amos Arlington, his daughter Ida, and Ruth, who had just arrived.

"Ha! the Hermit Chief ill!" cried the scout, catching sight of the recumbent form.

"He's done for, pard—he went to slip, an' I gin him a pil from ole Heart-seeker, an' it done the biz."

Prairie Pilot sprung past Yankee Sam, and with an exclamation of horror Colonel Radcliff rushed forward, crying: "My God! has it at last come to this? Would to Heaven I had been spared this sad scene."

"Arthur, thank God you have come, for I would see you ere I die—oh, God! this bullet is burning up my very vitals."

"Be calm, sir; your talking causes you greater suffering: what you would say, I can say for you, and if I err you can speak," said the stern, deep voice of Prairie Pilot.

"Who are you that dares to say he forsook of me?"

"Listen, and that shall hear, for I have a story to tell that interests nearly all present."

"Will you hear me, Chief?"

"Yes; but my life is ebbing fast, and—"

"I will not linger in my recital," and in his deep, clear tones, Prairie Pilot began his story, his piercing eyes bent upon the old Hermit Chief.

Eighteen years ago, there lived on a plantation home in a south-western State, a gentleman by the name of Herbert Lyndon.

"His family consisted at that time of his wife and two sons, the elder, named after his father, twelve years of age, and the youngest, a mere infant of three years.

"Into the neighborhood there came a physician, a widower, with a son of twenty years of age.

"Commencing to practice his profession, the physician was soon doing well; for he was generally very popular.

"Among his most intimate friends were Mr. Lyndon and his wife, who respected and regarded him most highly, and through the influence of the planter, the son got an appointment in the army.

"Other than to say that the youth was a good soldier, though a little wild, and ran off and married a young school-girl, I have nothing more now to relate of the son; but of the father I have much to tell.

"When Mrs. Lyndon gave birth to a little girl, the man I speak of was the attendant physician, and doubtless his skill saved her life. Better had it been had she died then, for ere she recovered her former good health, her husband sickened and died suddenly.

"It was a terrible blow to the loving wife; but, in all her sorrows and troubles, her physician was her devoted friend, and so kind did he seem, and so noble, that in a little more than one year after the death of her husband, she married the man, whom she had really learned to love.

"Shortly after his mother's second marriage, Herbert, the eldest son, was sent to Europe to finish his education, his stepfather so desiring.

"Several years passed away, and one night an attack was made on the gentle Herbert by an assassin; but the would-be murderer had not calculated his victim's remarkable strength, and was made a prisoner by the man he would have slain.

"With surprise, the young man discovered his intended murderer to be an American, a wild boy, the son of his late father's plantation overseer.

"Inquiry caused the truth to come out—the young man had been hired to kill Herbert Lydon, his employer being the man he had loved next to his own father.

"To escape being handed over to the authorities, the young man confessed all, and at once Herbert Lydon set sail for America, accompanied by his intended assassin.

"Arriving at home a terrible blow fell upon him, for he found his mother dead, and step-father gone, carrying with him his little brother and infant sister.

"None could tell where the physician had gone; but the sudden death of his wife caused suspicion to rest upon him of foul-play, and he had feared detection and fled.

"Herbert Lyndon at once had the bodies of his parents exhumed, and a scientific examination discovered that they had both been poisoned."

"Oh, God, have mercy! have mercy on me!" groaned the old, gray-haired Chief; but after a short pause the Prairie Pilot continued:

"The cause of this double, and intended treble murder, was then evident, for the will of Herbert Lyndon left all of his vast wealth to his wife, and in case of her death, to his children.

"The three children had also inherited a large fortune from their grandfather, and his will was, that, in case of the death of any of the children, those remaining should have the share of the deceased equally divided among them, and that they should claim their fortune, only when the youngest of the children should become of age.

"By his murders, the cruel step-father hoped to possess the wife's property, and then the wealth of the two children, the boy and the girl, whom he intended to mould to his wishes.

"Fearing punishment for his crimes, the

guilty man fled, carrying with him the boy and the girl.

"Infuriated against his step-father, Herbert Lyndon swore revenge, and commenced to seek the guilty man, to punish him, and gain possession of his brother and sister.

"For two years Herbert Lyndon tracked him from place to place, to at last find that he had been one of a train of emigrants going West, who had all been supposed to be murdered by the Indians.

"Mourning the loss of all he held dear, and tired of a life in the cities, Herbert Lyndon became a prairie-hunter, and for years has passed his life upon the prairies and in the mountains of this far Western country.

"A strange fatality seemed to direct his life in this, for, by so becoming, he found out that the wagon-train, in which were those he sought, and whom he had believed murdered, had fallen, not by the Indians, but by the bold plan of one man, who, with a few desperadoes, had killed all the emigrants and plundered them.

"That man was the step-father of Herbert Lyndon, and, from the attack on the train, he became an outlaw.

"Locating himself in the mountains, and gathering around him a bold set of renegades, he waged a relentless war for plunder.

"In this outlaw camp he brought up the boy and girl whose parents he had murdered, and if they, under his training, did wrong to many, they cannot be condemned for so doing, for their supposed father led or drove them on.

"Now my story is ended, and in that man you behold the author of all these crimes; in me you see Herbert Lyndon."

"Doctor Roger Radcliff, have I spoken the truth?" and Prairie Pilot laid his hand on that of the old white-haired chief.

"But he started, while a general murmur ran round the room—for Roger Radcliff was dead.

"Quietly, with the voice of his accuser ringing in his ears, he had passed from life into eternity.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CONCLUSION.

In the little valley, where Prairie Pilot had his home, Roger Radcliff was consigned to his last resting-place, and above his remains was erected by his son, Colonel Radcliff, a white board, with the following simple inscription:

"ROGER RADCLIFF, M. D.

"Died September 29th, 1854."

The surprise and delight of Ralph and Ione know no bounds, at having found a loving brother in the Prairie Pilot; but the maiden had heard all before from the lips of the scout.

Colonel Radcliff, though pained to the heart at the evil course of his father, warmly congratulated Herbert Lyndon, Ralph and Ione, and again and again begged the scout to forgive and forget the past, adding:

"To atone for my crime toward you, whom my father has so bitterly injured, I give you one whom I love more than all else in the world, for that your hearts are one I well know. Come, Ruth, if Herbert will have you, I give my full consent for you to be his wife."

Herbert Lyndon drew the blushing maiden toward him, while he said, softly:

"You have already promised me, have you not, Ruth?"

"Yes; even when an unknown scout I loved you with my whole heart," was the prompt answer.

Now that Amos Arlington was aware of the strange circumstances that had made Ralph Lyndon an outlaw chief, he gladly forgave him the past, for he knew that the young man would lead a far different life in the future, and the decision of her father rejoiced Ida, for she had never ceased to love her dashing, some husband, outlaw though he was.

"There is one little outlaw I would like to trail to the altar," said Bravo Bob, rufously glancing toward Ione Lyndon, who held down her head, while her elder brother replied:

"Her heart is already in the fetters of love, I am certain, Bob, and I freely give my consent, for you are a noble fellow, and though a little wild once, you have reformed now, and must return to your Kentucky home, and show them what a lovely wife you found on the border—and more! tell them that she is an heiress, for Ione is a very rich young lady, I assure you," and Herbert Lyndon drew his beautiful sister affectionately toward him.

"Other than to say that the youth was a good soldier, though a little wild, and ran off and married a young school-girl, I have nothing more now to relate of the son; but of the father I have much to tell.

"When Mrs. Lyndon gave birth to a little girl, the man I speak of was the attendant physician, and doubtless his skill saved her life. Better had it been had she died then, for ere she recovered her former good health, her husband sickened and died suddenly.

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over the Atlantic, and made a somewhat successful voyage by returning, after a four months' absence, with a cargo of sassafras. Several similar successes followed, and when Smith arrived in England, as we have seen, in the year 1604, the question of settlement in Virginia was then being vigorously discussed.

He entered into the scheme with much zeal. Young in years, ardent in temperament, hardy of body, and ambitious, he here saw opened before him a new career, and, after much difficulty, succeeded, with a few others, in organizing an expedition for taking permanent possession of the country between the 34° and 38° parallel (Cape Fear to Maryland), under a new royal charter, granted by King James.

This expedition, composed of three little vessels—the largest about one hundred tons burden!—sailed in December, 1606. It was composed of but one hundred and five colonists, of whom forty-eight were "gentlemen"; men both unused to work and who held themselves aloof from it.

The whole force seems to have been of most inharmonious and discordant elements. Fierce quarrels ensued, in which Smith so asserted his authority that he was put in close confinement for sedition, and so remained all the rest of the voyage.

Proceeding by way of the West Indies, the expedition finally arrived in the vicinity of Roanoke—but got to north of it, when a storm drove them in shore, and by mere accident the vessels ran into the great harbor of the mouth of the river Powhatan (now James). The splendor of the land induced them to run up the stream for forty miles, when the vessels were moored to trees, and the settlement of Jamestown commenced (May 13th, 1607).

Smith was permitted on shore in this arrangement, still being under arrest on charge of treason and sedition. As soon as the king's secret orders were opened, when a landing had first been made, it was found that Smith had been named one of the Council of Seven, but this did not effect his release until after the Council had organized, when he demanded his formal trial, and, after a thorough hearing, was declared not guilty; and ere long became one of the leading spirits of the adventure.

Taking twenty men and Captain Newport—chief officer of the fleet—he scouted the river to the village of Powhatan. This chief resided on the river, at "the falls," near where Richmond city now stands. The old Indian there lived in savage pomp, with hisarem of forty wives and his body-guard of one hundred, the sole sovereign of about eight thousand men, women and children. This "emperor" received his visitors courteously, and with some ceremony. He permitted them to voyage up the river at their pleasure, with the treacherous purpose of massacring the settlers in their absence. This attempt was made, but was frustrated by the vessels, which opened their guns and quickly scattered the terrified savages, who thereat had a wholesome dread of the "thunder-guns."

Returning in safety, Smith was compelled, by the incompetency of the Council, to assume charge of affairs, and soon placed Jamestown in good condition to resist any Indian attack. Newport sailed for England, with seventy more men and provisions, but also with independent powers that gave Smith great uneasiness and trouble. One absurd scheme was the coronation of Powhatan, which folly was carried out, rather to the old Indian's disgust than pleasure. It did not prevent the treacherous old scamp from playing double, but Smith was too much for him always.

The story of the contest of wit and strategy between these two is both amusing and highly illustrative of the two races.

It is perhaps needless in this sketch to dwell upon the succeeding twelve months' conduct of the colony. It was so full of trouble, contention and work for Smith, both with his own men and the red-skins, that we cannot wonder he was glad to be compelled, in the autumn of 1609, to return to England. A bag of powder on which he was reposing in a boat, in coming down the James' river, exploded and burned and lacerated his body so severely that he handed over his colony to a trusted agent, and in the six years following remained in England, recuperating his shattered health, writing out the history of his life, and informing his mind with books.

But he could not rest. In 1614 he was again afloat in a voyage of commercial adventure to the New England coast. This had highly favorable results, and he made a second trip, but only to be taken prisoner by the French and carried to France. From thence he made his way to England to once more try to raise a fleet, well armed, to trade with New England for furs. But he did not succeed, and he there remained until his death, in 1631, noted as a person of influence and consideration.

Now that the russet leaves are falling In the sun's declining light, And the lonely bird is calling For its mate to take its flight; Oh, 'tis sweet to gaze On the dying autumn days.

When the leaves are falling, And the birds are silent, And by shades are shaded, While a gloom a scene o'er spreads. In their whispers breeze sigh, Autumn days are passing by!

When on bird-deserted bower, With its leafless trailing vine Of the glorious passion flower, Rays of hazy moonlight shine; To sadness tunes the happiest mind; In the chill autumnal wind.

There are seasons gliding ever To the sun's declining light, Born like waters of a river. To time's ocean deep and vast, As the leaves from trees are falling, So our strength will drop away; On life's fading autumn day!

Base-Ball.

BY HENRY CHADWICK.

THE LESSONS OF THE LEAGUE CAMPAIGN.

THE first campaign under the banner of the Professional League Association has ended, and its close leaves affairs in anything but a satisfactory condition. For the first time in the history of the regular professional clubs, the season closes with great pecuniary loss to a majority of the clubs entering the lists in the championship pennant contests; and what is worse the past season has been characterized by more pool-gambling, more "crooked" play and more "revolving" in the professional arena than ever before known.

The race for the pennant, too, closes in a way

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Sunshine Papers.

Matrimonial Felicities and Consistencies.

BEHIND THE SCENES. BOTH.

"FRANK, I'd just like to know where you were last night? It is too bad of you to go off and leave me home alone. You have no consideration for anyone's comfort but your own."

"You were in early? Why did I not wait up for you? Yes; that is just like a man—selfish, through and through! Why didn't I wait up when I was tired and sleepy? Pray, what did you think I'd do, to keep myself awake? Read! I did not feel like reading when I had been out shopping all day; and that reminds me that I forgot to ask you for money, yesterday morning, and had to have all my purchases charged. The bills only amount to one hundred and eighty something dollars."

"I really must curtail my expenses?" Well, that is cool! Do you suppose I married you to have to practice greater economy than when I lived at home? Yes, I will curtail my expenses when you curtail yours! I notice that you smoke as many cigars as usual, and that your tailor's and furnishing bills are quite as heavy as ever; and I suppose last night you were somewhere spending a quantity of money. You were not? Well, where were you? Come, tell me."

"Around to the Spangler House, seeing a customer? I don't see why you can't do all your business up during the day, like a sensible person; you don't find me doing shopping of an evening. I would if I could! That's absolutely hateful of you, Frank; but we will not quarrel to-day, for I want you to take me to the opera to-night. I haven't been in an age."

"You can't? Well, I'd like to know why not; and I can just tell you that either you shall take me or cousin Ralph will! I'm not going to stay cooped in this house all the time! Come, now, can't you take me?"

"No? You have to attend a committee-meeting? You'll take me to-morrow night? But I want to see 'Il Trovatore'; to-morrow night is 'Mignon,' and we've seen that twice. Will you go to-night?"

"Don't bother you! Yes; you always get cross if I say a word to you. I was a goose to marry you; I might have known you didn't care anything about me; and there were plenty of men who would have married me and consulted my comfort a little, which is more than you ever do!"

"Oh, you need not kiss me, and tell me to stop crying, after the way you abuse me. I hate such deception! I wish you would go away. I can't bear the sight of you! Am I not coming down to breakfast? No, I feel too sick to eat a mouthful of breakfast; Bridget can pour your coffee for you; I'm sure you will feel relieved without my presence."

"What? You will order me a set of bracelets, sent home to-day, from Tiffany's? Oh, how lovely! Will I kiss you and make up?—Will you take me to the opera—to—to-morrow night? Yes? Well, then, I suppose I'll have to forgive you. Yes, I do believe I want a cup of coffee; and, Frank, remember I want the bracelets with the diamond and opal clasps."

BEFORE THE SCENES. HE.

"Going to get married, Tom? By Jove, you're a lucky fellow; there's nothing like it, my dear boy. 'I say, 'Boys, get a home of your own!' Oh, it is so nice to have your own home, and everything in it just as you like, and go and come when you please!"

"Can you do that? Of course, you can, if you know how to manage your wife correctly. "Why didn't I come down to the club last night?" Oh! I had a little private fun I wanted to work up—fair unknown, and all that sort of thing, you see."

"Can't I come over and see you to-night or to-morrow night?" Not very well; I'm going to a champagne supper to-night—that bet Holloway's you remember; and to-morrow night I must take my wife to the opera."

"Well, here we are at Tiffany's, and I must leave you. I'm going to select a pair of bracelets for my other half. Nothing like being a Benedict, you know."

SHE.

"Oh, Annie, I'm so glad you came; I was wild to have you see my two new silks and advise me how to have them trimmed. I bought them yesterday; are they not lovely! There's nothing like getting a husband, so that you can go out and buy what you like and not have

to stop, and think, and take into consideration that there are two or three more of you to spend his money, like when you are a girl at home."

"Does Frank let me spend as much money as I please?" Indeed, he does! He never says the first word about my bills. You do not suppose but he wishes me to be handsomely dressed.

"You are engaged to Tom Wilmet? Why, Annie, you dear girl! Well! I hope you'll be happy as I am. But then there can't be many such devoted husbands as mine." He perfectly worships me, I do believe; and does everything in the world, just as I wish him to. But, then, my dear, there is a great deal in knowing how to manage a man, if you want your own way. Frank was half-worried to death this morning, because I didn't feel well; and the darling old fellow is going to send me the loveliest bracelets from Tiffany's.

"Why do we come over and spend an evening?" Well, positively, Annie, there is scarcely an evening I do not have an engagement; though last night I was so tired I went early to bed, while Frank ran out a little while on business; and to-night he has to attend a committee-meeting, or some such horrid old thing! Poor dear; I'm afraid he'll work himself sick, but you know business must be attended to. But to-morrow night he insists that I shall go to the opera with him, and so it is all the time. But we'll come sometime, soon, dear."

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

THE GUIDE-BOARD.

NO. IV.

D'ye know what road to honor leads? And good old age? A lovely sight!

By way of temperance, honest deeds, An 'tryin' to do y' duty right.

—OLD SONG.

Don't you love old folks? I do, and I honor them, too. I never think them in my way. They have as much right on this mundane sphere as you or I. We've got to be old ourselves, some day, and we'll not desire to have people wish us thrust aside and out of the way, shall we? You may think them fussy and pokey. They are not all so, and many of those that are, have reason to be so; and if they, in turn, look upon us and on our actions as flighty, doubtless they seem so to them, and doubtless we are flighty and heedless.

You don't want to grow old? Perhaps you cannot help yourself. You'll want to live as long as you possibly can, take my word for it, for it would be unnatural not to do so. I have

always noticed that those persons who "wish they were dead" have the greatest desire to cling to life, and have a fearful dread that they may be snatched away from life suddenly.

A good old age is something to be desired. Our guide board tells us that, and it also tells us how we can have the goodness to look back upon when we do grow old.

Honor and old age seem to go hand in hand, at least they should—and to gain these the path of temperance is one of the surest of roads.

I don't mean temperance in drinking solely, but being "temperate in all things"—temperate in our desires, our words, and our acts. Not to blame others for what are our own faults. Not to entice others to error, and then read them a homily against evil-doing.

Not to spur the wrong doer from our path and call him all bad, when we have not endeavored to instill one germ of goodness into him. How many go to the bad because we don't try to reclaim them! How many swerve from the right path because we let them! We don't call them back and tell them they are on the wrong road, or, if we do, we don't think it necessary to guide them on the right one. We may point it out and let them try to keep it, and then we think our duty ends. But it doesn't end there, and that is one reason why so many go astray.

Learn to smile upon a customer, whether your boot pinches or not, and try to put up with as many goods as you have to put down.

Cultivate an address that will persuade a lady who comes in for a calico dress that she wants a silk one instead, and will buy it without getting too mad.

Always make a mistake in wrapping up the goods, and if possible send them to the wrong place.

As near as you can come to measuring a yard will be the best in the eyes of aggravatingly honest people.

Never get out of patience until you begin taking down the other side of the store which doesn't contain the exact piece of goods your customer wants.

Be able at first sight to calculate the precise amount of lumber it takes to make any woman's dress.

Be sure to tell them the calico will wash—not only wash, but do the ironing—at same price.

Tell them that if any goods fades it does so against the express orders of the firm; and that the firm is as well-founded as the colors.

Adjust your necklace before the glass when you see a lady customer coming in, and wipe off your chin.

Let your discrimination be so nice that you can't tell the difference between half-worsted and all silk, and you will receive several dollars reward in the hereafter, or you can send the bill back to me.

Address every lady who comes into the store as Miss: you will find it will not prove to be amiss.

When you find that a woman has made up her mind to get just such a dress, you had better not try to change it if you want to sell anything.

If you can imagine you are several hands higher than the proprietor it wouldn't hurt your character to do it.

Never make humorous remarks about the prevailing styles in the presence of customers.

Adjust your necklace again.

If you are tired lie down and sleep on the counter, and see that you have your soft head on a place—or your head on a soft place.

Readjust the rose in your button-hole, and shift your finger-rings.

Improve your leisure time in putting goods back on their shelves without swearing and you will have a little more than you can do.

Wait upon the ladies with alacrity, and see that you don't keep them waiting on you.

Don't raise a dispute with a lady about the quality of the goods, because you will come out last first every time.

Deal gently. Remember that the little deals amount to a great deal.

In showing gloves always show the first pair or two or three sizes too small; it makes a favorable impression, and does no injury to your trade.

Throw a somerset and see if you have parted your hair exactly behind.

Never hurry a lady in making up her mind; it doesn't discommode her if she keeps you waiting half a day looking for "that other piece."

She desires to see all the sorts except the "out of sorts" in a drygoods store.

Don't vary the price according to the size of the smile.

Be very careful of naming the precise shade that is most suitable to the complexion; you might not come within three colors of it, and get yourself into trouble.

It is for you to decide what overcharge is to be refunded.

Black your boots over again.

Don't bet too much money on your own vanity; you might lose something.

In making out a bill don't stretch the figures any more than they will possibly stand.

Eat cinnamon-drops, and lie sweetly, and salt your descriptions with as much Paris as you can—or more.

When pretty girls drop in, don't make a number of goose of yourself any more than you can help.

Keep talking all the time; brush off your coat-sleeve, and you will follow fortune, if fortune doesn't follow you.

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Topics of the Time.

—Ladies, prepare for the coming change.

There is talk of a complete revolution in the style of hair dressing; hair cut short in the masculine fashion will compete with the braids, coils, etc., of the present mode. Semi-masculine line costumes of cloth, completed by a felt hat with a wide brim and broad brim turned up on one side under a long plume, after the fashion of those worn by the cavaliers of Louis XIII; are struggling for favor.

—Accepted: "A Case of Appeal;" "Slumber Sweetly;" "When and Where;" "A Hand and Heart;" "Mrs. Jepson's Distinguished Guest;" "Losing Odds;" "The March of the Trees;" "Dream-

er."

F. H. B. Guide to New York and map of city. Send to American News Co. Price twenty-five cents.

W. D. H. We will use the poem; glad to be assured of its entire originality. Send it along.

A. T. S. We use one poem, with slight changes.

JOHN G. Westerly. Your verse is, we think, pretty well made against "Enchantment." The analogy is "striking."

MRS. CLAUDIA T. Can't use sketch; too much space required. It came underpaid six cents in postage. No stanza is omitted.

QUEEN VICTORIA. Queen Victoria is the daughter of the Duke of Kent, fourth son of George III. She succeeded to the throne because the other sons had failed in heirs. She became queen June 20th, 1837, when just eighteen years of age. She is, consequently, now in the thirty-eighth year of her reign. Her grandfather, George III, reigned over Jersey years.

M. L. M. There is no "specific" that we are familiar with, against growing fleshly. Avoid all medicines or acids for such purpose, for they will but ruin health and give you a very bad skin. Probably the best preventive is a good bath. Eyebrows and eyelashes can be colored easily. Any druggist will supply the paint, and a good paint.

—ELLIE J. Roundout, writes: "Is it out of the way for a young girl to give a philopena gift to a gentleman, if he has caught her? And can you tell me how to make a philopena case?"—To make a shaving-case, from a square of silver or yellow gilt perforated board, out two pieces the size of a sheet of "commercial note" paper, or two oval or pearl-shaped pieces equally large. Embroider these with a line with silk of the same color, and bind, and trim around with box-plated ribbon. Fasten the two covers together at the top with bow of ribbon, and add a loop by which to suspend it. Fix a loop of colored ribbon upon the top edge of the case, and a pinked about the edges. Or pretty covers may be made of white cardboard, pinked on the edge and ornamented with "spatter-work."

—PET MARIE asks: "What can a young lady do to rid herself of evening callers who will stay very late? Why cannot young men leave a reasonable time to go to evening parties?—To make a shaving-case, from a square of silver or yellow gilt perforated board, out two pieces the size of a sheet of "commercial note" paper, or two oval or pearl-shaped pieces equally large. Embroider these with a line with silk of the same color, and bind, and trim around with box-plated ribbon. Fasten the two covers together at the top with bow of ribbon, and add a loop by which to suspend it. Fix a loop of colored ribbon upon the top edge of the case, and a pinked about the edges. Or pretty covers may be made of white cardboard, pinked on the edge and ornamented with "spatter-work."

E. M. V. says: "I had a quarrel with a lady who was a friend of evening callers who will stay very late. Why cannot young men leave a reasonable time to go to evening parties?—To make a shaving-case, from a square of silver or yellow gilt perforated board, out two pieces the size of a sheet of "commercial note" paper, or two oval or pearl-shaped pieces equally large. Embroider these with a line with silk of the same color, and bind, and trim around with box-plated ribbon. Fasten the two covers together at the top with bow of ribbon, and add a loop by which to suspend it. Fix a loop of colored ribbon upon the top edge of the case, and a pinked about the edges. Or pretty covers may be made of white cardboard, pinked on the edge and ornamented with "spatter-work."

JACK K. C. A lady by no means "always sticks to her no" in regard to a refusal of marriage; and if you are persevering you may be a successful wooer yet. A note of introduction sent through a friend may be successful; and it may be necessary to bring about a reconciliation.

SPATTER-MONIA. We have on several times given directions for that pretty work, but will repeat them for your benefit. Pressed vines, leaves, ferns, emblems, initials, or mottoes are arranged, with fine-pointed needles, upon a white ground. Use India ink to write the names, and dip the needles in water and draw across a fine comb. The fine spay thus produced must be repeated, as each application dries, until the shading is sufficiently dark. Part of the ornaments may be removed before the last application, and the remainder appear white, or black, white upon a darkly shaded ground. This work may be done upon card-board, or upon muslin or swisse for tides, or upon silk or satin.

EDWARD A. says: "If I receive a handsome gift and am quite sure from whom it comes, although there is no name or sign attached, should I acknowledge the gift? If you are quite sure, it is all right to do so. If you are not, you should suppose that the giver especially desired to remain *incognito*."

MISS D. O. writes: "A young lady and her mother came to my house upon a visit. The young lady asked my permission to invite such of her friends as resided in the town

CHILD AND MAN.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD

Robert, when he was a child,
At his play about the knee,
When I looked at him and smiled,
Often came and said to me:
"When I get to be a man,
I will love no one but you."
And I answered: "If you can,
Make your promise good and true."

Years went by, and Robert grew
Nobly up to man's estate,
And I grew up, for I knew
That he could not yield to fate.
Yet he often said to me,
As he kissed me on my lips,
"I have said, and you shall see
That no love shall yours fill."

But there came a time when he
Lingered often from my side;
And I thought of fate's decree,
And for love I could not chide.
Mindless, I said his handsome face,
But I knew he loved me still;
Young hearts have an empty place,
Which another heart must fill.

Came he one day to my side,
And he kissed me on my brow.
"Mother, I have won a bride.
Can you love another now?"
And his pale, sombre face grew bright
With a smile, and said he,
As I answered: "I have quite
Room enough for Robert's bride."

Ah! I knew! the heart of youth
Years for more than mother-love!
Can we put aside the truth
Which is whispered from above?
Man must seek himself a mate—
Some young heart to fill his own,
And his is a lonely fate
Who must live his life alone.

THREE

Links in Love's Chain.

BY GRACE MORTIMER.

LINK THE FIRST.
"TILL A' THE SEAS GANG DRY."

CHAPTER I.

In Stokington, an English seaport of no note whatever, once lived a pair of lovers—a sailor and a village maid. They had made a great secret of their "sweet-hearting," for a very excellent reason—the heroine of the idyl happened to be entirely dependant upon an ancient aunt who was hotly averse to her making anything but a good match—the hero in the meanwhile being naught as to cash; therefore, never a gossip in all Stokington guessed that the wedding-day was fixed, and that Mary Lee was going with Ned Morris on his three years' cruise to the South Seas. Such a goodly lad was Ned! Such a dainty flower was Mary!

The Stokington maids roundly and fervently expressed their admiration of him; while not a bachelor in the village could see fair Mary flitting by without casting sheep's eyes at her.

In view of the coming bridal they were one evening sauntering along the sands, bare hand in bare hand, as simple folks will, when Ned says, trying on a bit of the sensational:

"Mary, do ye know what I heard in the village to-day about you? That you'd taken up with me all on a sudden, just for to play me off ag'in Squire Glover. That's 'cause we walked home from church together last Sunday."

Now I can't tell you how this village girl loved her lover. We all sing the luring, passionate love songs, but how seldom come the wild words true in real life!

Yet I firmly believe that the fresh and the true love with just such fire and fidelity—

"Till a' the seas gang dry."

and so loved Mary Lee.

For him—I do not know: he admired her; splendid creature, who would not? and he hung breathless on every look and word, and yet—

Mary, her dark cheek glowing like the lip of a foreign shell, and her great, rich black eyes darting a glance into his that would charm St. Simeon Styles off his pillar, says:

"Playing you off against Squire Glover, hey? Humph! so you gossip about me! Well now, how d'ye know but I am?"

"Any other girl would have sent such a blubbering craft far astern when she'd got the offer of a three-decker like him," says the sailor, ruefully. "I ain't much of a catch, my dear, am I?"

"No," reply the velvet lips, demurely, "not much. Really, I think I am foolish—though it isn't too late to mend. I haven't said no yet; and when I think of the grand house—affected to ponder—"and the servants, and the carriage and pair!"

"Belay there! mayhaps some day I may get ye all them things," cries Ned, jealously.

"—And the county balls," calmly continues the young gipsy; "and the house in London, and the silks, and jewels, and laces; and all ready to my hand if I only answer the squire's letter with a 'yes'—"

"Only ye couldn't act the black-hearted part, Mary," puts in Ned, devouring the brilliant, drooping face of his sweethearts.

"With a 'yes,'" she goes on, "instead of a 'no,' as I meant to do for your sake—why, am I not silly to stick to you, Ned—to you?" she suddenly lifts her face, perfectly resplendent with love's glory, and blots out the very memory of her teasing words with a love-look—which piece of mute oratory Ned provokes himself capable of appreciating by clasping her, regardless all of *les convenances*, to his broad breast, and pouring blessings on her head for an act of true love too seldom rivaled, fair ladies, in Tyburnia and Belgravia.

"My pretty darlin'" mutters Ned, feasting his eyes on the fair form endowed with a soul as fair, "how could I doubt ye for a moment? Haven't I known ye ever since ye was that high? leveling his brown hand about sixteen inches above the sands, "an' did ye ever deceive me, fun or 'arnest? Never, my darlin'! never! An' never will I give ye cause to rue that ye chose the sailor lad above the gentle-man's head; no, my bonnie Mary—

"Til a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
An' the rocks melt w' the sun;
Oh, I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands of life shall run."

The pretty words were still dropping flatteringly from his lips, and his arms were still about his sweethearts, when a female Stokingtonian came around the black sea-bluff plump upon them, and then transports vanished, of course.

This fresh arrival was not exactly a Venus de Medicis in cornelian, inasmuch as added to the strange spell of her classic outlines and transparent glow of coloring, a spritely and alluring coquetry lurked in her gem-blue eyes, and her delicate limbs were draped in inartistic folds of the linsey-wolsey sacred to her class.

Folks in Stokington used to call Mary Lee, with her jet-black locks, and Lucy Corrie, with her gilded tresses, the fairest pair that ever God fashioned; and each was wont to treat the other with marked respect, as being her only peer in the village.

They were neighbors, and that, among such, means intimates.

When, therefore, Mary Lee, turning hastily from Ned's encircling arm, caught sight of Lucy Corrie standing like a statue and staring at her and Ned as if she had just dropped upon two beings from the moon, whose peculiarities froze her with horror, she exclaimed, with friendly interest:

"Well, Lucy, have we frightened you? But it's all right, we're to be married a Tuesday; I told aunt this morning."

This address, though meant to calm the discreet alarms of Lucy Corrie, seemed to overthrow and rout her utterly; she turned pale as ashes, faltered something inaudible, and darted away, leaving the pair where she had found them, utterly dumbfounded.

Mary recollected herself first.

"Oh, I must see what ails her," said she, darting off in her wake.

"I'm coming in this evening," shouted Ned after her. "If your aunt don't like it she must lump it."

Mary threw back an aurora smile at him and ran on.

Ned stuck his hands into his trowsers-pockets, squared his massive shoulders, and softly whistled:

"Oh, my love is like a red, red rose!" looked after her straight, lithe, gliding figure with proud eyes of possession until it disappeared round the next bluff, and then he looked at her slender footprints on the tawny beach, little slits of shining water that the creamy-white surf rolled up to kiss and rolled back from leaving no trace; and then he strolled up from the beach and finished the song on the moor.

CHAPTER II.

MARY caught Lucy behind the rocks. She was standing beside one of those black pools which the sea loves to scoop out under the cliff—they call them "jugs" at Stokington, and avoid them with simple awe, supposing them bottomless—on the sandy brim of this stood Lucy, like a white heron watching for fish.

"Dear heart! Lucy Corrie, do ye see where you're standing; and—my goodness! what's the matter with ye, at all?" exclaimed Mary, forcibly struck with a certain raised, panting and tragic air which the little beauty wore.

Mary started and fixed a wild, anguished gaze upon her.

"His heart!" she whispered, with white lips; "to be sure, isn't that mine forever and ever?"

"It once was mine!" wept Lucy; "oh, Mary, can't ye lift the glamour off him, you that know so well how to lay it on, and give him back to me, honest?"

Mary trembled in every limb.



"Ye've stolen my sweetheart, and I cannot live without him."

"Do ye see this hole, Mary Lee?" demanded Lucy, wildly. "My heart's broke, and I'm going in there. Don't dare to stop me; ye'll only send me in the faster. I've seen on your beach enough to make life too miserable for me to bear."

"Is the lassie demented?" gasped Mary, in affright. "What have you seen, Lucy; an' what is't, anyway?"

"You ask that, you!" cried Lucy, vehemently. "You that has stole my sweetheart, an' broke my heart; you that's to be married to him a Tuesday; oh, fie, Mary Lee, how dare you stand there to taunt me?"

"Your sweetheart!!!"

"Yes, mine; long before he ever thought of you; the light of love, the cruel, cruel traitor!"

"With a 'yes,'" she goes on, "instead of a 'no,' as I meant to do for your sake—why, am I not silly to stick to you, Ned—to you?" she suddenly lifts her face, perfectly resplendent with love's glory, and blots out the very memory of her teasing words with a love-look—which piece of mute oratory Ned provokes himself capable of appreciating by clasping her, regardless all of *les convenances*, to his broad breast, and pouring blessings on her head for an act of true love too seldom rivaled, fair ladies, in Tyburnia and Belgravia.

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me that ye'll never say aught to him about me, or as sure's death in I go, and ye may screech yourself hoarse as a crow, they'll never hear you till I'm a woeful corpse."

"Well, well, I will not," cried Mary, blown about at Lucy's will by the immediate fear of a tragedy; "but, oh! lass, what am I to think? Ye've blackened my love before my eyes, and ye dare me to say a word; what then, Lucy Corrie, would you have me do?"

"Give him back to me!" wailed the girl, with passionate importunity. "What do you want with him? Ye have offers a-plenty, an' the quality at your feet. Oh, give him back to me!"

Mary stood transfixed. If Lucy Corrie had asked for a hand or a foot, she would cheerfully have cut it off and given it her, but to ask for the very core of her heart—how could she give her that?

Mary was what you call a woman of boundless and impulsive generosity, of that crystalline simplicity which judges others by its stainless self, and without one spark of self-preservation.

All that such a woman could do in this dilemma was to believe every word that Lucy Corrie said, and to hasten to the rescue.

"Lucy," said she, "you may have your sweetheart back for me. I wash my hands of him"—she felt as if the words in passing blistered her lips, and she stopped for breath a moment.

"I never knew I stole him from you, he vowed so solemnly that I was his first love—but now—take him."

She was turning away with a sad face when Lucy sprang round her neck with a scream of joy. "Will ye do this, Mary darlin'?" she cried, half-frantic, "oh, bless ye, bless ye, kind, good Mary! But, alack!" she wailed, with a sudden gush of tears, "though you may give me back his body, ye cannot give me back his heart. That ye will keep forever, Mary Lee."

Mary started and fixed a wild, anguished gaze upon her.

"His heart!" she whispered, with white lips; "to be sure, isn't that mine forever and ever?"

"It once was mine!" wept Lucy; "oh, Mary, can't ye lift the glamour off him, you that know so well how to lay it on, and give him back to me, honest?"

Mary trembled in every limb.

"To be sure you are!" exclaimed sexagenarian ardor, gloating delightedly over the coil of black hair and column of fair neck which was all he could see; "and now you've given me my answer, well! we'll have a grand bridal, just as fast as we can get it up. Eh, Mary Lee?"

At that moment came a clear, cheery whistle through the evening air. She started as if an arrow had pierced her heart, and whipped her hand out of the squire's, looked this way and that way, her two hands pressed hard on her bosom; then shuddering—yes, shuddering like a wounded animal—she muttered, hoarsely:

"I'll do whatever ye like, Mr. Glover," and darted into the cottage, just as Ned Morris came tramping round the corner to the music of his tune.

The young lover found an old one leaning over the gate of his "Red, red rose," with a very foolish and sentimental confusion breaking all over his smiling face, and the sight took him considerably aback.

"Evening, Morris," said the squire, blandly.

"Belay there! and who's a better right?" cried Ned, bluntly; "all night to ye, square!"

Squire Glover moved off, slightly solemnized.

Then a ray of comfort dawned on him.

"She'll soon be off with her mind to have me," thought the elderly admirer, cosily; "I believe I'll wait a bit for the fun of seeing his phiz when he comes out."

He sat down on a mossy stile, lit a cigar and waited.

(To be continued.)

of such interest to them, had already contrived to engage herself.

Other actors in the brief drama of Barbara's love-affairs were living through an intense experience at that very time.

When Delorme Dunleath hurried to the bedside of his suffering child, he met there one who had an equal right beside that dying couch, yet whom it was torture to meet, and especially then and there. Oh, for the privilege of pillowing the head of his little son on his breast, and weeping tears over him, unseen by her! Oh, for the privilege of forgetting that she was his mother! But the inexorable *fact* remained!—nothing, in this life, or in eternity, could change the *past*.

The boy was nine years of age, beautiful, and of great promise. The clergyman, in whose family he lived as pupil and boarder, seemed to grieve over his illness almost as if it had been one of his own children. It wrung Delorme's already long-enduring heart to see the bright eyes stare at him, unrecognizing, and the golden curls tossing, tossing restlessly on the hot pillow; while the sweet lips, all black and parched, moaned pitifully and unceasingly.

Mrs. Courtenay sat at the foot of the bed, passive and subdued. Delorme bowed to her when he came in, and then took no more notice of her. The nurse who attended on the child knew so much better than he what to do, that Delorme did not interfere.

All night, the first night of his arrival, he walked up and down the floor of the sick-room. In his feet slippers his footsteps could not be heard; and the wretched woman sitting there, so patiently, with her face turned from him, would not have known that he was stirring had not the faint, shaded light of the candles thrown his restless shadow on the wall before her eyes.

Those two unhappy watchers had much to think of as the night wore slowly on. The circumstances recalled vividly to each the black spot on the page of their past history.

Vivian Courtenay had the least to comfort her. She had been the sinner—the man, whose phantom-like shadow constantly and slowly passed and repassed her on the wall, the *sinned against*.

Ten years ago—yes, ten years ago *this very night*, the plot against Delorme had been consummated. What a noble, handsome, glorious boy he was then!—in his nineteenth year, proud, ambitious, generous, a splendid scholar, and too noble by nature to envy the superior prospects of his cousin, the earl, one year his junior.

Delorme had a fine patrimony of his own—an estate that would have seemed ample had it not come in comparison with that which was to be his cousin's. His own father being dead, he had accepted the kind offer of the earl, his uncle—then living—to reside in his family.

The countess liked to have him, as a companion for her son, always delicate and ailing—liked to have him, because he amused Herbert and gave much time to him, always willing to sacrifice his own tastes or pursuits to keep beside his sickly cousin. The countess wanted Herbert to be amused, and to have so valuable a friend; yet, in the depths of her proud, amorous heart lurked envy and hatred of the young nephew whose fine health enabled him to excel his son in many sports and in his studies. She could never forgive Delorme for having these advantages which nothing could purchase for Herbert.

all her pretty arts, her stolen glances, her *accident* meetings with him on the grounds, resulted in nothing better than making Herbert furiously jealous.

They were decorating the grand old cathedral for the Christmas services. The young people of the rector's family, including the curate, assisted the young people of the castle. Several afternoons were spent delightfully in twining wreaths of evergreen and making mottoes suitable to the occasion.

Herbert enjoyed the preparations more than any one else; for his sister, Lady Grace, was allowed to assist; consequently her governess was free to accompany her, and there, in that dim sanctuary, free from the *soothsaying* eye of his mother, he had many delicious opportunities for enjoying the society of the woman he loved. In the midst of the general mirth and activity he could feast his eyes and his heart on the smiles of the charmer.

Their caution became carelessness. One afternoon, in the swift-growing twilight of the brief winter day, the countess came in to observe how the work was progressing. There was much talk and laughter, and a great hurry to get a certain motto placed before it should grow too dark to work. So no one noticed the proud lady as she came silently up one of the dim aisles, pausing by a great stone pillar, to watch them, as two young ladies held up the leafy lettering, while the curate went boldly up a fragile ladder to fasten it in place.

There was a low murmur of voices the other side of the pillar; the countess caught a word by chance; started, listened, bit her lips, and turned pale in the ghostly twilight. Then she inclined her ear, determined to hear all of the murmured colloquy; when it was over, and the motto, meaning fixed in position, she retired as silently as she came, to her carriage waiting outside.

It was perhaps fifteen minutes before her own young people came out, chatting merrily as they crowded in beside her. It was then too dark for them to read her face, or two of them might have trembled; but the countess had great self-control, and when the charming governess—who had, in the absence of company, the privilege of a seat at the dinner-table—spoke to her ladyship an hour later over her plate of *consommé*, she received a polite and quiet answer which betrayed none of the anger raging beneath that jeweled corset.

That evening, while the young people were playing blind-man's-buff in the great fire-lighted hall of the castle, the countess, who had sat privately for the curate, was having an interview with him in her own apartments.

The following afternoon her ladyship graciously accompanied the little party to the cathedral, assisting with her own hands at the work of decoration. She was very pleasant. She and the curate had a very lively chat, in the course of which it was proposed that some two of the young folks present should stand up before the altar and go through the ceremony of marriage. Of course the boys and girls thought this would be very amusing; several couples volunteered; but the countess laughingly had her own way, the result of which was that Mrs. Courtenay stood up with Delorme Dunleath, and what Delorme supposed to be a mock-marriage took place. The curate even brought in the parish register from the vestry, and the parties, amid much merriment, signed their names.

"I think Herbert is safe from that adventure now," said the countess to herself, when the pretty little scene was over.

There was plenty of amusement for the remainder of the afternoon. Delorme did not much relish it; for he had an actual aversion to Vivian Courtenay, founded on the advances she had made to him. Herbert, too, was restless; but to the others it was all pure fun.

Those belonging at the castle went home in time for dinner. They were still all seated at the table when the curate was ushered in, who, with much apparent agitation and distress, said that he was afraid their play of the afternoon would turn out but a sorry jest—the rector had just informed him that the marriage he had performed that afternoon was a legal and binding one.

Then had followed a scene where the drama was real enough. Delorme turned pale as a sheet and swore he would never acknowledge it; the bride screamed and fainted away, most gracefully; while poor Herbert went into horrible spasms before his mother's eyes.

That was her punishment for her heartless and ruinous trick played on her nephew; her son, her darling son, for whose sake she had committed such foul treason, was worse always after that. His love for Vivian Courtenay and his sudden disappointment acted very dismally on his shattered nerves.

Delorme Dunleath long refused to consider the marriage into which he had been trapped as a marriage. His aunt affected innocence, and it was not until he was older and wiser, that he suspected the part she had played against him. The curate, meantime, had his reward in the shape of a handsome living in another part of the country.

It was only by appeals to his honor as a man—by declaring that her heart was breaking—by many long, passionate appeals, and tears, and supplications on her bended knees, that Delorme finally came to yield to the claims of his unloved bride and acknowledge her as his wife. Of course he could, in due process of time, by representing the fraud practiced on him, have obtained a separation; but Vivian appealed to him in such a way that his high and delicate sense of what was due to a woman prevailed over his distaste, and he accepted her as his wife.

Never, for one moment, was he tempted into the union by her charms, or any feeling for her beyond that of a chivalrous pity.

And so they lived together two years as man and wife.

But when, years afterward, Delorme assured Barbara Rensselaer—in answer to that proud, exacting beauty's demand—that he had never loved any woman but her, he spoke the solemn truth.

His experience with Vivian Courtenay had given him a fear of her sex which Barbara had been the first to change into love.

A few months after his marriage with Mrs. Courtenay, a son was born. A year after that he detected her flirting with a former acquaintance—an army officer—left her, shocked and disheartened by her guilt, and finally took the necessary legal steps to obtain a divorce. To save her from the temptation of sinning, he made her a liberal provision. He was very fond of the child; and after placing it away from its mother, where it would be suitably cared for, he began a life of travel and constant change.

Delorme had all these blighted years to look back upon as he paced back and forth, that night, in the chamber of the dying boy. This woman had been the curse of a life which ought to have been a happy and successful one. The only bright thing in all their association had been this boy. His thoughts were dark and bitter and hard as he paced the night out.

But they were not as wretched as those of

the guilty and disgraced woman, who could only be allowed the companionship of her child because he was dying, and she could not harm him.

She was getting too *passive* to flirt successfully now—her "occupation was gone"—fading, solitary, despised—what had life for her?

She watched in motionless silence for hours the shadow which flitted to and fro on the wall—that, and the face of the sinking child; while the nurse moved about doing what was necessary.

Suddenly she started up with a loud cry; Delorme came quickly to her side—the boy was dead.

The unhappy mother threw herself beside the corpse, kissing the still burning cheeks and brow. For a long time her wails were pitiable to hear; Delorme waited patiently until the first burst of grief should subside; and finally the nurse interfered, lifted her from the couch, and proceeded to arrange the hands and feet of the slender, stiffening figure. After this was done the nurse went out.

Then the mother arose and came close to Delorme, looking at him with beseeching eyes. He could not even hold out his hand to her; there was no sympathy between them; he was deadly pale with his own sorrow; but he could not affiliate with this woman.

"I am going to tell you something," she said, in a clear whisper. "The time has come to undeceive you. I am willing you should know the truth now. But even now, in the presence of this corpse, I would not tell you, had not Miss Rensselaer—who still loves you—saved my life at the risk of her own. It is only as if I told it to *her*, that I tell it to you. The boy, lying there, was my child, but he was not yours. He was your cousin's. His mother knows it. Yes, the proud countess knows. She overheard us talking in the cathedral, and to save her son, she sacrificed you. You have that to thank her for."

"I ought to curse her," he said, in a low, steady voice, "but I will not. The Lord has cursed her. Her husband—her fair little daughter—are dead. Her son is worse than dead. Oh, I pity her! But you—you are more criminal than I imagined you, Vivian! Poor boy, I am glad you are gone out of this wicked world before you learned the stain that rested on your birth," he added, tenderly, glancing at the face of the dead child.

"In the presence of that hovering spirit will you not forgive me?" whispered the woman, trembling before him. "Forgive me, and I will go away, and lead a better life—I shall never hear from me, or be troubled by the sight of me again."

"I do forgive you, then," answered Delorme, with an effort. Even as he spoke the nurse returned, bringing with her Lady Alice's desperate message, by telegram: "Unless you are at the cathedral at eleven to-morrow morning, it will be too late."

It was long past midnight when he read the dispatch.

CHAPTER XXII. BEFORE THE ALTAR.

THE two carriages from the castle reached the cathedral at about twenty minutes past eleven. Lord Ross lifted the half-fainting form of his daughter to the pavement and offered her his arm. Mechanically little Alice laid her cold hand upon it; her great blue eyes, bright with the fear which raged in her brain, wandered up and down the road and into the vestibule of the building.

She was looking for Delorme.

As her father began to walk into the vestibule she hung back, but he dragged her on, saying and doing nothing to attract the attention of others, but forcing her along by his side.

Behind them came Herbert with his mother; after them such of the servants as had been able to get away.

"Oh, papa, wait a moment," gasped Lady Alice, in the vestibule. "I—I think I have lost—"

"Your handkerchief again?" said her father, with an evil smile. "Never mind—we will find it afterward; and, if you do not behave yourself now, Alice, you will repeat it." he hissed at her, under his breath. "No fooling. I will not stand it."

She cast a piteous, appealing, agonized look into the hard face of the one who should have been her protector—it was cold and firm as steel.

Another quivering, agonized look out into the road.

"Alice, my child, are you ready?" asked the motherly voice of the countess, behind her. "Marie, come here, and arrange the bride's train; there are no spectators, but we desire our daughter to look her loveliest."

The maid spread out the long white train of the road.

"Alice, my child, are you ready?" asked the motherly voice of the countess, behind her. "Marie, come here, and arrange the bride's train; there are no spectators, but we desire our daughter to look her loveliest."

The maid responded to the countess' call for the bride, hesitating and embarrassed.

"Yes, it is all true," murmured Lady Alice; "I do not love the earl, and I do not want to marry him."

"She loved him well enough until his course came along, and purposely set to work to prejudice her," explained the countess. "Delorme did it out of revenge for a fancied injury. He will never marry her, though he may think so. My son is deeply attached to her—he wishes to make her happy—to surround her with luxuries—to honor her, as his wife, with the proud title he can confer upon her. This is but the silly freak of a young girl, who does not know her own mind. Her father understands her—so do I. When I tell you, Mr. St. John, that it is all right, when you doubt me?"

"No, your ladyship. I have no doubt but that you are wise and discreet in this matter."

Unless the young lady absolutely refuses to answer in the affirmative to the questions of the service, we will proceed to finish the ceremony."

Barbara released the bride's hand and stepped back. She had fulfilled her duty. She had urged upon Lady Alice to save herself. If the girl was too weak, too lavish in her fear and obedience to her father, to protect her own rights now, why, she must bear the consequences. It was not for her to further urge one so cowardly to make an effort for herself.

Barbara's magnificent eyes flashed fire.

"Not even for Delorme's sake?" she thought to herself. "If I were in her place, I would burst the walls of this cathedral with my slender hands, before they should bind me," and she looked with contempt at poor little Alice, trembling in the midst of her persecutors.

"Alice!" whispered the earl, clutching at her hand. "Come! you are mine. Do not anger me any further, or I shall make you remember this in the future."

It was the worst thing for his own cause he could have said.

She looked up in his black eyes—sometimes sweet and winning in their smiling light, but now lurid and threatening, with a passion and fury which he could no longer wholly tame—looked up and shuddered. Yes, doubtless, in the future, with that jealous, uncontrollable temper of his, he would find ways enough to punish her! Her very timidity and dread of him gave her the courage which nothing else could give. She dashed his hand away, then sprang, like a wild creature, out of the circle, and ran down the aisle.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 340.)

figures being something similar. She turned pale and red; but that steady pressure of her father's arm forced her onward to the altar.

Arthur Granbury had a prayer-book open in his hand, affecting to be engaged with it. He arose nervously as the bridal-party reached the altar, looking toward the doors eagerly. Where were Miss Rensselaer and the gentleman she was to bring from the train? There were no signs of them. He was not authorized to interfere; nor did he form any plan of action.

The rector stood up in his place, the ill-assorted young pair before him, and the solemn marriage service of the church began. The good, gray-haired old clergyman read out, in the matter-of-course tone of one who attaches no importance to the words, the earnest injunction—"If any one knows any just cause or impediment why these two should not be joined together in the holy bonds of matrimony, let him now come forward, or forever after hold

"I know of just cause and impediment, " cried a clear, vibrant young voice, which, sweet as it was, startled the few on whose ears it fell with an electric shock. "Rector, I command you to pause."

The reverend gentleman and his curate stared in astonishment. A young lady, beautiful, graceful, walked rapidly forward; all turned and fixed their eyes on her pale, glowing face, that shone like a star, with its own inward splendor. She advanced straight to the bride and took her by the hand.

"Come away with me, Lady Alice," said brave Barbara.

"Who are you? What does this mean?" asked the countess, with withering contempt; but her haughty face was blanched with a sudden fear of what she knew not what—only, her conscience was not easy, and a guilty consciousness is quickly alarmed.

"Beware!" cried Lord Ross, with so threatening a look at the beautiful intruder, that Arthur started forward for her protection. "Release my daughter's hand, and retire."

"Will you come with me, my dear?" Barbara asked the quivering girl, with the tender air of a sister. "The train was off the track—she could not reach you—but I will take his place. Come, come! do not sacrifice yourself. I will be your friend until Delorme arrives."

"Delorme!" burst from the earl's trembling lips. "Is that the key to the riddle? Away, and leave us together. She is mine."

"Tell this good man that you are being forced into this marriage," Barbara bade the timid creature she was trying to draw away.

"Hold!" cried Barbara, firmly; "it is illegal for you, reverend sir, not to listen to the objection your rites call for. There is a just cause why these two should not be joined in holy matrimony. The young lady is not willing—she is being forced into it by her father, while her very heart rebels and shuns, sick and fainting, from the altar. Lord Ross and the noble Countess of Dunleath both know that she does not love the earl—that she is very unhappy at the thought of marrying him. But, reverend sir, the countess wants a wife for her sickly son, and the honorable lord wants money to pay his gambling debts, and to live on in luxury, and so this child is to be the victim. She came to me last night—walked four miles in that dreadful storm—to ask me to get a telegram dispatched to Mr. Delorme, asking him to interfere and save her, if possible, from the marriage arranged for her entirely by these interested parties. She complained that she was kept a prisoner. She climbed from a window, and made her way to Dunleath Inn, in her desperation. I am a stranger. I have no right to interfere, except the sacred right of humanity. I am an American girl, and I can not rest, while one of my English sisters is being cruelly sacrificed to rank and gold. Sold—yes, Lord Ross, as much *sold* as if bartered for in a Cirean slave-market. It was my duty to come here, and tell you, reverend sir, what I knew of this matter, that you might refuse to have a share in the crime."

"In this true, what the lady tells me?" asked the rector of the bride, hesitating and embarrassed.

"How can it be fancy her?" she asked herself, as she saw the young man bend down to break a bunch of heliotropes from their stalk and fasten them in her hair. "She is a mere baby; her pretty face and babyish ways have captivated him. What strange fools men are!"

The young man was playing with the girl's yellow hair now; he lifted a strand of it, and let it ripple over his fingers, catching the sunlight till it looked like a tangled mass of spun gold; she, smiling up into his face, was fairer than any rose in the garden.

"I wish I could crush her, so!" cried the watcher, in a swift and bitter rage, as she crushed a spray of fuchsias into a bruised and shapeless mass, and then dropped them on the floor and ground them under her foot mercilessly. "She has always been in my way, always stood between me and the things I covet, to ask me to get a telegram dispatched to Mr. Delorme, Dunleath, asking him to interfere and save her, if possible, from the marriage arranged for her entirely by these interested parties. She complained that she was kept a prisoner. She climbed from a window, and made her way to Dunleath Inn, in her desperation. I am a stranger. I have no right to interfere, except the sacred right of humanity. I am an American girl, and I can not rest, while one of my English sisters is being cruelly sacrificed to rank and gold. Sold—yes, Lord Ross, as much *sold* as if bartered for in a Cirean slave-market. It was my duty to come here, and tell you, reverend sir, what I knew of this matter, that you might refuse to have a share in the crime."

The woman was like a tigress crouching for its victim. Her eyes were full of baleful fire. Her hands worked convulsively, as if they were at the throat of the girl in the garden.

The young man bent down suddenly, and snatched a swift kiss from the girl's lips. Her face was like a rose in its sweet confusion. The girl was a woman now; a trusting, loving woman, and though the color stained her cheeks, she lifted her pure eyes to his, and they were full of happy light.

The woman in the shadow of the rose-vines clutched her hands together, and her face was ashy in its pallor.

"Has it come to this?" she cried, and her voice was so sharp in its pain that he heard her and looked up, but saw no one. "Genevieve Braithwaite, if you win, I lose; and you shall not win!"

If you could have seen Margaret Braithwaite, you would have known that she was terribly in earnest. She was not the kind of woman to let any one stand between her and the fulfillment of a plan she had set her heart upon carrying out.

She loved Percy Graye. He had won her heart without asking for it. If she had not cared more for him than for any other man she knew, she would willingly have given him up to her cousin. Resolved to win him if it were a possible thing. Of late she had fancied him more than before, but he had not been to her daily, but he was no wiser than other men, and like other men, he was strong in the belief that it is easy to forget a woman when they set about it.

But it was not quite so easy a thing to do as he had thought it. There was some nameless witchery about her which kept him at her side, and made him forget, for the time being, all that Margaret had told him. When he went away, and her face was out of sight, he would blame himself for being weak enough to let her see how great her influence over him was, and resolve to be cool and indifferent in the future; but the next day was sure to see him at her side again.

Margaret watched matters with alternating hope and fear. Whenever she could do so, she dropped little hints which Percy, with the quickness of jealousy, was sure to understand. He would meet Genevieve with distant ways, next day, but her sweet face would disarm him, and he would go away, wondering if it were possible that she could be so consummate an actress in the art of deception. Either she was playing a part whose *role* was innocence, or Margaret had been mistaken in what she told him.

a bitter ring in her voice. "You need make no excuses. If Percy Grayle were going if would probably be clear to you that your duty called you to dunt Ethel's."

"I will go," answered Genevieve, with a sudden icy dignity, that kept Margaret from making any reply. "It will make no difference to me whether Percy Grayle goes or stays. Perhaps it would to *you*, however, and with this parting feminine shot, she left the room, just as Percy came up the steps.

"Good-morning, Margaret," he said. "I have just heard some news, and I came to tell you about it. I think you must have been mistaken in what you told me about Rodney Trevor."

"Why?" asked Margaret, foreboding disaster to her plans, from his eager, excited face.

A gentleman came up from the city last night to see my brother, and he told us of Trevor's marriage to a lady to whom he had been engaged for a year," answered Percy. "You must have been mistaken, you see, for he knows the parties well."

"I may have been," she answered. "I know that he came here to see Genevieve, and that he came a lover; and since then they have corresponded regularly. I never asked her to tell me of her affairs. I took it for granted that he received encouragement, or he would not have cased to write."

"Where is she? I would like to ask her about it?" he said. "He believed that there had been a wrong done somewhere, intentionally or otherwise, and he was tired of playing at cross-purposes."

"She has gone out somewhere," answered Margaret. "She is going away to-morrow morning, and I do not know how long she will be gone."

"Going away? Where?" he asked, eagerly.

"To stay with an aunt of ours in Virginia, who is sick. I do not know where she has gone now; she will be very busy packing to-night, and as she will leave before daylight, you will hardly have a chance to see her again. Have you any messages for her? I will deliver them, if you choose to leave them in my care."

"I would rather see her," answered "I must see her before she goes."

"But you can not," answered Margaret, who knew well enough what he wanted to see her for, and was resolved to prevent any meeting. To allow an explanation to take place would be death to her plans.

"But she would be able to spare me a few minutes of time this evening, wouldn't she?" he asked, desperately.

"I can only repeat what I said before, that she will be too busy to see any one. I have got to help her, and it isn't a very pleasant nor easy matter to get a woman's wardrobe ready for a journey at so short a notice."

Percy was at a loss. There was a question he wanted to ask her, but if he could not see her it must remain unasked for the present.

Suddenly the idea came to him that he could write a note and leave it for her. Margaret could give it to her, and she could leave an answer.

He would do so. He wrote a few lines and sealed them, and gave them to Margaret, who had been watching him with a face fearfully pale. The time for decisive action on her part had come.

"Will you give her this, and tell her that what I have written I would much preferred to have said?" he asked, putting the note in Margaret's hands. "You will not forget it?"

"No, I will not forget it," she answered. "If you have nothing more to say, I shall have to ask to be excused, as there is so much to be done."

"I will not stay to hinder you," he said, and went away.

He came over the next morning.

"Has she gone?" was his first question.

"She has gone," answered Margaret, with a smile that was full of ill-concealed exultation.

"And her reply to my note?"

"She left no reply," answered Margaret, stooping to lift a book that had fallen from the table.

"Left none?" he cried, turning pale. "Are you sure?"

"Quite sure," answered Margaret. "You will be satisfied, I hope, when I tell you that she said she had no reply to make. Oh, Percy, how can you be so blind?"

"Because I was fool enough to love her, I suppose," he cried, angrily. "I believe you, Margaret. She is not the woman I thought her."

He could only have known that a little heap of gray ashes on the hearth in Margaret's room was all that remained of the note, and that the eyes he had intended it for had never seen it!

Days came and went. Percy was with Margaret a great deal. In many ways she drew him thoughts of Genevieve, and made him think of her instead. She was tenderly thoughtful of his comfort. She took pains to read the books he liked, that she might talk of them with him. She learned his favorite songs. She did everything she could to show him how much a woman will do for the man she loves. And Percy was not insensible to all this. It is very pleasant to think that one woman's heart keeps you the uppermost place in her thoughts.

And as the days went by Margaret told herself that she was winning the man she loved at last. Before long she would have nothing to fear from Genevieve's witching eyes and sweet child-face. She knew Percy well enough to feel sure that when he had asked and won her promise to be his wife, there would be no danger of his withdrawing from the fulfillment of the engagement. He was too honorable for that.

"A little longer, a little longer!" she cried, one day, with strange exultation in her face, as she watched him go down the garden path. He had left her with a kiss upon her lips.

For his life, Percy Grayle could not tell what kept him from asking Margaret Braith to be his wife. There were times when they were alone, when the words would almost cross his lips, but always something kept him from uttering them. He believed that he loved her well enough to be happy with her. Not with so vivid a passion as that he had felt for the woman who had trifled with him; but it was love nevertheless.

And Margaret waited for the words that would be sweeter in her ears than any honey from Mount Hybla on her tongue, to be spoken. But she never heard them. Sometimes she tired of waiting. But she felt so sure of Percy that she could afford to wait. No one could come between them now.

That day they had roamed up and down the woods bright with the wonderful glory of Indian summer. The world had seemed very far away. There were it only them, and everything seemed to be whispering of love. His mood had been in keeping with the influence of the quiet, tender day, and Margaret had never felt so sure of his love before. That kiss of his kept thrilling her with strange feelings of triumph. It was like the seal of fulfillment on the one great hope of her life. That which she had striven for was very near now: very near.

How strange it is that when we count upon almost certain success, many times something comes between us, and that we think it impossible to lose.

That night Genevieve Braith came back. Her aunt was dead, and there was nothing to keep her away longer.

Margaret Braith sat down in the silence of her own room to think it all over. What effect would her cousin's coming have upon the man she loved? Would the old infatuation come back to him? Could he resist the witchery of blue eyes and yellow curls, and the sweetly pure face?

"I will not give him up to you, Genevieve Braith!" Margaret cried, with all the tiger in her nature up in arms. "Never! never! I will kill you first! He is mine, mine! and you have no right to come between us. So beware!"

She watched Percy Grayle's face next day when he met her cousin; her hands clutched themselves together in a fierce spasm of rage and hatred when she saw how the sight of Genevieve could make his eyes kindle, and the old, glad eagerness come into his voice. She was not so sure of him after all. He had not freed himself from the witch's spell yet.

She did not leave the room while he stayed. She dared not trust them alone together. If she were to see him, she would seek some explanation of Genevieve's conduct regarding his note, and her guilt would come to light. In that note he had asked her to be his wife. If he were to find out that it had never reached her, the old question would be repeated, and that which Margaret had worked for so long would be lost forever.

"Something must be done, and that now," she said, to herself, when he was gone. The look on her face was not a pleasant one. It was like that of a person who has grown desperate, and in his desperation cares little what means he makes use of to accomplish his purpose.

"So nearly won!" kept singing itself over and over in her brain till it maddened her. She shut herself up to keep the sight of Genevieve's face away. At times she felt as if she could kill herself.

In the silence of that night death began his work at Braith Hall. His agent was one of terrible grandeur and power. Higher and higher leaped a scarlet flame in one corner of the house, and spread from room to room on its swift raid of destruction. When Genevieve awoke, half-strangled by heat and smoke, everything about her was wreathed in flame. She sprang up and ran to the window in wild terror. Below her was one vast billow of fire. She flew to the door and strove to open it. It was locked!

"My God! must I die in this terrible way?" she cried, white as the garments she wore. The heat was scorching her yellow curls. She had to gasp for breath, and the air she inhaled was like fire itself.

"Genevieve, Genevieve!" cried a voice that she knew so well, through the tempest of fire about her, full of agony and fear. "Oh, Genevieve, answer me. Where are you?"

"Here I am!" she cried, in wild, shrill tones. She seized a heavy chair and dashed it against the door. The light panels shivered into fragments beneath the blow. Another, and another, and she was no longer a prisoner.

"Here I am, Percy," she shrieked; "save me!"

"You shall not stand between us any longer," hissed a voice in her ear in perfect accord with the hissing fury of the flames. "You have got to die!"

Margaret Braith's hands pushed her back into the flame-filled room relentlessly.

"Oh! Mercy, mercy!" she cried, straining to shake off her cousin's hands.

"I haven't any mercy," hissed Margaret Braith.

"Genevieve! Genevieve!"

The voice was near by now.

"Here I am, Percy!" shrieked the girl.

"Oh, help me! help me!"

Percy Grayle sprang toward her from a perfect tempest of fire that was sweeping down the hall.

The officers darted out. But the game was dead; Algernon Floyd was not to be seen, high or low.

Fred Ashe felt the flickering pulse of the wounded woman, and endeavored to staunch the crimson current pouring from the bosom; but his efforts were in vain. The bullet had plowed through the very chambers of the heart; and Minerva Clayton, prostrate on the floor, a purple tide welling from her bosom, the rich red blood staining the snowy night-dress.

In an instant the physician was by the side of the fallen woman.

At that moment the front door was crashed in, and a half-dozen policemen rushed into the mansion.

Algernon Floyd saw his position, saw his doom. Without a moment of hesitation, he turned like lightning, and sprang through the rear window—glass, sash and all giving away.

"After him, men! quick!" shouted Dr. Ashe. "Behind the house! Secure him dead or alive!"

The officers darted out. But the game was dead.

"It is better thus! ay! far better thus!" murmured the physician, a tear, unbidden, dimming his eyes, as he gently, tenderly, composed the stiffening limbs. "There is oblivion in the grave! Beautiful, misguided, erring Minerva may Heaven shrive thee of thy sins and shortcomings!"

And the brawny-armed officers who grouped silently around muttered:

"Amen!"

Algernon Floyd had indeed escaped immediate danger. He glanced not once behind him as he fled on through the almost deserted streets, and lonesome lanes, toward the Schuykill. He soon reached Fairmount. Skirting the northern border of the reservoir hill, he hurried onward. At last he paused by Girard Avenue bridge and peered around the jutting rock at Moll's old house on the bank.

He started, as he noticed a bright light streaming from the windows.

"Ha! Fate itself is against me!" he gasped. "I must seek refuge elsewhere. God pity me for I am to pitied!"

Waiting no longer, he turned up the steep embankment leading to the abutment of the bridge. At last, almost exhausted, he reached the top and stood upon the bridge.

He noticed not a dark, herculean figure which had followed closely behind him, all the way from the reservoir.

Floyd hesitated not a moment, but passing through the gate, hurried along the bridge toward the western shore. He had not taken a dozen steps before, suddenly, the dark figure still hanging behind him, darted upon him.

A fierce struggle ensued; but Algernon Floyd was already exhausted; he was now no match for his gigantic antagonist. Slowly he was borne back over the rail, which guarded the sides of the bridge. His foe's hand was grasping his throat; his lungs were almost bursting with strugling air.

"Aha! now I've got you, Mars Capen Aly!" growled the assailant.

"We've met at last, and I golly! 'tis for das' time! Ya! ya! don't twist, fer I've got you! You is a-chokin', is you! Ya! ya! das' right! Das' for poor

Becky, das' poor gal, das' you killed for nothing, ya white-livered piece o' trash! Take dat an' dat!" he continued, furiously, drawing a heavy knife, and driving it with a frenzied force into the exposed breast of the unresisting, fainting, dying man!

"Take dat! an' when you gits to de bad place, member dat Black Ben settled scores wid you at last! Dar!—dat will do! Now, overboard!"

Catching the dead, limp form of the mur-

dered man, he lifted it, as though it were a feather, and flung it far over the railing of the tall bridge.

The summons was not answered.

Again the physician rung.

Only a moment elapsed, when half-timid, hesitating footsteps sounded within the lighted hall. The bolt was turned and the door partly and cautiously opened. In an instant Dr. Ashe placed his shoulder against the panel, and shoving the door wide open, entered the hall.

Minerva, the wife, half *en dishabille*, a small night-lamp in her hand, her face white and scary, her long black hair streaming over her snowy night-dress, crouched like a frightened hare behind the door.

She recoiled, and trembled so violently that the lamp came near falling from her hand.

"You here!" she exclaimed, in a husky, tremulous whisper. "And what would you, Dr. Ashe?"

"I would see your husband, madam; I have business with him," answered the physician, calmly, though at first he had been startled at the sudden sight of Minerva.

"What would you have of him, Dr. Ashe?" and she clutched him appealingly by the sleeve. "Speak! for Heaven's sake, tell me the truth!"

"Seek your chamber, Mrs. Floyd," returned the physician, in a warmer, more sympathizing tone. "You must, for your own peace of mind, for your own honor, endeavor to forget Algernon Floyd."

"Oh! what is this? Heaven stand by me!" moaned the poor woman, as Dr. Ashe hastily ascended the stairs and rapped boldly on the library door. He waited for no voice bidding him enter, but turned the bolt and entered the room.

Algernon Floyd, half dozing, was sitting by the table, leaning his brow upon his hand. He started to his feet, as the rap fell upon his ear, and Dr. Ashe strode into the room. In an instant he was erect—his hand in his bosom.

"Ha! Fred Ashe! you are rather unceremonious!" he ejaculated, threateningly. "What brings you here to-night?"

"The determination to see justice done in Philadelphia," was the reply.

"What do you mean?" and Floyd's face grew ashen pale.

"Just what I say, sir."

"Out with it! What do—"

"I mean to arrest you, Algernon Floyd, in the name of an outraged Commonwealth, for the foul, cowardly murder of your own uncle—Thompson Floyd!" hissed the doctor.

"Back! back! You are crazy! Stand back! Leave this house, or—"

"Back! No! Do you know these articles—your property—Algernon Floyd?" suddenly interrupted the physician, as he unrolled a small bundle which he had carried beneath his coat. He cast on the table a wet, frayed, faded cord once of red silk, and a rusted dagger of peculiar make.

With a wild cry of horror Algernon Floyd reeled back. But as his face grew almost black with the frenzied expression of desperation, he paused, snatched a pistol from his pocket and fired.

A low, gurgling moan, a half-ery of heart-breaking grief broke on the air, and a heavy fall echoed in the outside passageway.

Dr. Ashe, unharmed and untouched, quickly turned. He gasped for breath as he beheld Minerva Clayton, prostrate on the floor, a purple tide welling from her bosom, the rich red blood staining the snowy night-dress.

In an instant the physician was by the side of the fallen woman.

At that moment the front door was crashed in, and a half-dozen policemen rushed into the mansion.

Algernon Floyd saw his position, saw his doom. Without a moment of hesitation, he turned like lightning, and sprang through the rear window—glass, sash and all giving away.

"After him, men! quick!" shouted Dr. Ashe. "Behind the house! Secure him dead or alive!"

The officers darted out. But the game was dead; Algernon Floyd was not to be seen, high or low.

Fred Ashe felt the flickering pulse of the wounded woman, and endeavored to staunch the crimson current pouring from the bosom; but his efforts were in vain. The bullet had plowed through the very chambers of the heart; and Minerva Clayton, prostrate on the floor, a purple tide welling from her bosom, the rich red blood staining the snowy night-dress.

And the brawny-armed officers who grouped silently around muttered:

"Amen!"

Algernon Floyd had indeed escaped immediate danger.

A FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

I put more coal on the grate;
I saw that coal is quoted higher;
I lit this hamper round my neck,
And draw up closer to the fire.
I sneeze at this bad cold I've got;
(This cold and I will stick together);
I take a draught of boneset now;
And sing farewell to summer weather.

Oh, summer, why should you depart
With all your gold and sunniness?
And change our clothes, so very cheap,
For thicker ones which cost more money?
The flowers have faded long ago;
A shivering thrill all nature seizes;
No more, no more the roses now,
For nothing blows now but the breezes.

The times for sitting on the steps
On sunny days are gone and tender,
And vowed from buggars we'd defend her.
We no more lean upon the gate
And talk and dream of future blisses;
In language that has many a pause,
And fill the pauses up with kisses.

No more the night invites to sit
And wander down along the river,
The moon though warms up the soul—
But causes now the frame to shiver;
The lonely drives are done and gone;
We no more pass the evenings pleasant;
We've got to sit within the house—
And the old folks are always present.

The paths are soggy, wet and cold,
And broken bones are now wounded;
The days for linens dusters ended.
A man could be responsible
In summer days for nothing, mostly,
But how the wheel of fortune turns,
Alas, it now is very costly!

The change, indeed, is very great,
But the small change is growing smaller;
Now the sun is in the debt of the moon,
The sunset gets short, the board-bill taller,
Oh, summer days, a long farewell!
My very soul grows misanthropic;
I'll get my landlord's free consent
And make my strides toward the tropic.

Adrift on the Prairie :

OR,

THE ADVENTURES OF FOUR YOUNG NIMRODS.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "DAKOTA DAN," "IDAHO TOM,"

"HAPPY HARRY," ETC., ETC.

I.—ON THE SHORES OF WALL LAKE.

The sun had just crossed the meridian when we drew up on the northern shore of Wall Lake with the intention of pitching our tent there for a few days. To unhorse our horses, slake their thirst from the cool waters of the little sheet, and secure them at grass, occupied but a few minutes, when we proceeded to erect our camp upon the bank, within a few paces of the water's brink.

It was a beautiful October day—the poet's most charming ideal of Indian summer. A blue, ethereal mist hung over the lake and plain like the vision of a pleasant dream over the memory. The warm, mellow zephyrs drifted lazily over the pulseless bosom of the water and whispered low and soft among the trembling reeds and brown, rustling grass. All nature reposed in its sweetest, calmest mood.

On our right, looking southward, was a little point of land projecting into the lake, and covered with a thin growth of trees and shrubbery. From the east and the south side of the lake stretched an interminable prairie clothed in tall, brown grass, and here and there marked by a lonely farm-house that looked like a black, piratical craft without sail or mast, riding upon the undulations of that mighty ocean of verdure.

As we gazed around us, we could scarcely believe that a country so populous—whose eastern and southern shores were dotted with towns and villages, checkered with farms and diversified by railways—contained a scene so untrammelled by civilization, so free from the ruthless hand of man, and as wild and romantic almost as when it came fresh from the hand of the Creator.

From where we stood the bank sloped gradually down to the water's edge. It was smooth and firm, and covered with white sand and pebbles, which, continuing into the lake, gave the water an almost transparent color. At different points along the shore rose walls of huge rocks and boulders piled one upon the other with some regards to mechanical precision. From this wall the lake derives its name. We had often heard of the famous Wall Lake, whose shores were a natural drive along which the Jehus and cavaliers of an extinct race had exercised their elks and buffaloes—over whose crystal waves the young ancient lord had rowed his lady fair, his oars keeping time to his song of love.

By some scientists, the formation of these remarkable walls have been accredited to the Mound Builders; by others, to the Red Man. There are no rocks in the lake, nor are there many on the surrounding plain; which fact leads me to believe that the mystery connected with the erection of these walls finds its solution in the Glacial Epoch, and can be satisfactorily accounted for under no other theory known to geological science.

The lake was about five miles long, by from one to two in breadth. Its shores were irregular and indented with coves and bays. On the east the surplus waters filtered through a dense track of reeds, until, converging at a single point, they poured into a narrow channel along which they continued, gathering strength as they advanced, finally developing into the beautiful Raccoon river.

So anxious had we been to reach this wonderful little lake, that the sight of it, and its surroundings, filled our breasts with joy and admiration. Our big friend, Kempty, unable to restrain his enthusiasm, gave expression to his feelings in the exclamation:

"Ga-lorius! sublime!"

"Splendid—grand," added George, his black eyes sparkling as they had never done since the day he received his diploma from the Iron City Commercial College.

"It is for a fact," assented Bob, his eyes as summing the proportions of full moons.

Many and various were the remarks that passed our lips concerning the lake and its surrounding beauties; but, they were finally terminated by Kempty, who, in a less enthusiastic tone, said:

"Boys, food for the vision is not food for the stomach. You fellows might live on sentiment and poetry, but as for me, give me something more substantial—real facts in the shape of roasted duck and biscuit. I'm losing flesh already from irregularity of our meals. Our commissariat is about exhausted; the 'miraculous' has nearly all evaporated, and we far, far from home and friends."

Kempty, as he was better known, was a man of three-and-twenty years. He possessed a form and strength that might have been the envy of a Roman gladiator—the whole of the man balancing two hundred pounds of bone, muscle and tissue, a keen, black eye, a quick brain and a lively, jovial spirit. Besides, he possessed some peculiarities

of disposition. He would always look upon the gloomy side of life, throwing a sufficient amount of sadness and melancholy into his face and tone to carry conviction with it. This, however, was but a cloak to disguise the real object of his brain which usually was busy hatching up some joke or sell to perpetrate upon his companions. He would oppose one for the sake of argument, and naturally enough had our whole party to contend with.

George was Jim's opposite in point of size and strength, but upon nearly every occasion, proved his equal on all the salient points that characterized our adventures among the lakes.

The duty of preparing dinner devolved upon Bob, who had had considerable experience in the cook's capacity before. But, as has been the case with many a good housewife, our cook was put to his wit's end. Aside from hard bread and coffee, our provision-chest was depleted. However, the hunger which seemed to have attacked all, soon suggested a plan for obtaining food. The lake was before us alive with its finny inhabitants. We had fishing tackle in our wagon, and in a few minutes every man was ready with rod and line to cast his baited hook into the water.

In searching along the shore for a favorable spot to begin our sport, Jim espied a fishing-boat and a canoe tied up in a little inlet to our right, and he at once suggested that we charter the former for our purpose. As no one appeared to dispute the right of our claim, we at once sprang into the clumsy craft and pushed out from shore. About twenty rods from the bank we anchored in a fathom of water by means of a long pole.

Then we cast our hooks into the water, and, silent as statues, awaited the result with an anxiety plain to be seen on every face. That each one was desirous of being the first to haul out a fish, was quite evident from the nervous manner in which he watched the others' lines. The suspense, however, was finally broken by Bob landing a fine, large catfish in the boat.

A look of disappointment overspread Jim's face, and he at once became as uneasy as the fish wriggling in the bottom of the boat, muttering something to himself in an undertone.

"So that I beat George King," he finally said aloud, bobbing his hook up and down to attract the attention of any fish that might be passing near, "I don't care a snap. I don't want it said that I don't little Pennsylvania schoolmaster beat me a-fishing."

Scarcely had the last word fallen from his lips ere George brought a large fish out of the water. A look of despondency settled upon Jim's face; he gave his pole another jerk, sighed heavily and ogled the others' lines.

In a few minutes an ample supply of fish had been caught, when we returned to camp to prepare them for the table. While Bob was engaged in cleaning them, another dug a narrow trench in the ground and kindled a fire therein. Then a frying-pan, with a bit of butter in it, was placed on the edges of the trench over the flames. The fish were cleaned, rolled in flour and placed in the pan, and soon the odor of frying fish and aroma of boiling coffee filled the air and sharpened the appetites of the quartette of young Nimrods.

Finally we sat down to a feast that would have tickled the palate of a king. The fish were sweet and delicious, and we indulged our appetites to their satisfaction.

After our repast was over and the table cleared away, we indulged in the hospitality of a cigar, meanwhile arranging a programme for the future, and adopting some rules and regulations by which we might determine our success in hunting. It was decided that no game unit for food should be counted, nor game killed but not brought in. The scores were to stand as follows: a prairie hen, 6; a duck, either teal, canvas-back or mallard, 6; a squirrel, 8; a goose, brant or pelican, 10; a swan, 20; a crane, 30; a deer or elk, 50; and catfish, pike and trout, 2 each.

As the evening drew on apace, the "houk" of a wild goose was heard in the distance, and was soon answered by other winged fowls coming into the lake. Every man at once looked to his gun, which was a double-barreled piece of the most approved manufacture. Kempty sported a huge English Twist of about the heft and caliber of a small field-gun. Charging each barrel with a handful of 00 shot, he began casting about him for a living target.

By this time ducks, geese and brants were to and fro across the glassy surface of the lake—in and out of the purple haze of the distance like a weaver's shuttles. The water was still and unruffled, and glimmered in the rays of the declining sun, a tiny jewel clasped to the bosom of the brown, rugged prairie.

Suddenly Jim espied a flock of geese in the water some distance away. They were swimming along parallel with the shore, their white breasts cleaving the limpid waters like the gilded prow of a fairy boat. Our big friend's eyes sparkled with joy, and turning to us, he said:

"Boys, I'm elected to bring in the first wild geese—can't help getting one with old 'Stub-and-Twist' here"—patting his gun. "You fellows beat me on fish, but I'll show you how to take in winged game. There's science in shooting—only luck in fishing. And then, when I kill one, my dog Ben, that you fellows have advised me to kill will come in for his share of the sport. You'll see him split the lake in two as he humps himself through the water after the dead game. I'm sorry your guns are too light for such a long range, or that I might score ten, too. Here, come along, Benjamin, my dog," and Jim started off, with a quick, elastic step, around the lake, with his dog at his heels.

He made his way to the inlet where the canoe, before mentioned, was beached; and seeing where he could gain some advantage by taking to the water, he launched the little craft and embarked therein, hugging the shore closely so as to put a little slip of land between him and the unsuspecting fowls.

He soon reached a point behind the peninsula, and running his canoe into a clump of reeds and aquatic plants close to the shore, he put himself in position to fire as soon as the geese rounded the point. And he had not long to wait. In a few moments the leader of the flock, a large gander with ringed throat, arched neck and stately mien, sailed proudly into view. Jim raised his gun, glanced quickly along the barrel, and was in the act of pulling the trigger, when the boat received a violent shove that threw him flat upon his face in the bottom. Before he could rise to his feet, he felt some sudden weight drop into the canoe, and a heavy hand seized him by the collar.

"We shall see to-night. I want you to go this afternoon if you have no other engagement. I want you to call on the ladies you have named, dressed in the disguise I shall give you, and we will see who is right or wrong."

Two hours later, Gracie Garland went demurely out her aunt Ruth's door, and her second self would not have recognized the beautiful, stylized, spirited girl in this quiet, prim, elderly woman, dressed in stone-colored merino, guiltless of an overdress, a black cashmere shawl pinned over the lovely shoulders, the neat lace thread gloves on the dainty hands, and the Dantable straw bonnet, close around the face, with a white ruching inside, and white strings, and a double green val tied over the face that was completely masked by the blue glasses, the smooth, gray wig, with its parting in the middle and combed carefully over the ears.

Even aunt Ruth relaxed into a smile as she detained the neat, unassuming woman a second on the door-step.

"You ought to succeed, Gracie. Take this list I have headed with my subscription—it may help you or—not help you. Remember the Denhams, the Lawlesses, the Grandisons and the St. Phillips. I'll wait dinner for you."

And so Grace started off, her lips compressed demurely, her merry eyes shining behind the blue spectacles, her little, graceful step converted into the leisurely, business walk compatible with her assumed character; while Miss Tempest went back into her sitting-room, where the bright spring sunshine came goldenly in, and took her accustomed seat and her knitting, and wondered if she was not selling the key of the old cedar chest too dearly—if it was not too harsh an experience the bright, trustful, happy girl would buy—whose life had been so sunshiny, so little dailed by the cold realities.

Here Jim's herculean strength asserted itself, and springing to his feet, he shook old Lige off as easily as though he had been a pigmy, instead of a large, burly man, with a round, rough-bearded face and a big wart on his nose.

"You blasted old sardine!" was the irate Jim's exclamation. "I'll send your old carcass to the bottom of this lake, dog-gone your old chuckle-headed picture!" and lifting the old fellow in his strong arms, he flung him into the lake. Then he took up the paddle and started back toward camp, while his adversary scrambled to the bank, shook his fist at the fleeing youth.

Meanwhile, Jim's dog had preceded him to camp several minutes, with his tail between his legs, his back up, and yelps of terror pealing from his lips at every bound.

uberant fun, as she thought of the masquerade she was acting; half in keen delight to anticipate the prize she was to receive for her task; and a wondering apprehension if she would prove her dear friends the people Miss Tempest thought them.

Her reflections were interrupted by her arrival at the palatial entrance of the Denham mansion, through which she passed with not a little trepidation, yet remembering very gratefully Mrs. Denham's lofty expressions of or lofty views of benevolent charity, as she rung the door-bell, and inquired of the footman who had so often ushered her in with all the pomposity of which he was possessed, if she could see Mrs. Denham a moment—and to start, in shocked surprise, to hear that lady's voice come pealing down the grand staircase, from her post of curious espionage.

"Foster, tell the woman I wish to buy nothing to-day! Why such creatures have the importance to come to the front entrance I cannot see. Close the door at once, Foster!"

Grace answered very quietly, as she caught sight of a head adorned with crimping-pink.

"I am not selling, madam, but begging, and for the St. Erasmus Hospital, and hearing—"

Mrs. Denham interrupted her rudely:

"I have nothing to give—I never encourage door-begging. Foster, see that she goes at once!"

And Grace actually felt tears in her eyes at the sudden falling of an idol!

"I'll profit by Mrs. Denham's reproof, however, and ring at Mrs. Lawless' basement door—dear Cora, with her gentle, spirituelle face and shy, sweet ways! It will be a positive relief to see her, if only for a minute."

And for a whole minute Grace stood, confounded, bewildered, as, in answer to her timid ring, a woman opened the door; a woman so strange, so familiar in a scant calico wrapper, guiltless of a collar, with a chalky-white face, shiny and smooth as if polished, and a decided frown of impatience on the forehead.

Was it—could it be Cora Lawless, whose reputation for exquisite taste in her toilets, for her pure, childish sweetness was as well-known as her name?

Her voice—high-pitched, unrestrained yet familiar—broke sharply into Grace's astonished silence.

"Well, what's wanted?"

Grace felt her voice trembling as she announced her errand.

"I can't afford to give a cent—I have spent enough on the Hospital already, and the more you do the more you may do. No, I shall give nothing."

And Mrs. Lawless the elegant, refined, charitable widow, whose name headed the list on the Martha Washington Reception for the benefit of the St. Erasmus Hospital, who enjoyed the delightful reputation of being the most successful of all the lady managers in obtaining donations, slammed the door in Miss Grandison's face!

A little hysterical laugh sounded under the double green veil, as Grace went up the steps slowly.

"I never would have believed it of Cora—never! To think how gracious and charming she always is—"

And, as she rung the bell of Mrs. St. Philip's door, there was a very suspicious moisture between her sad, surprised eyes and the blue-glass spectacles.

She had hardly time to collect herself when her summons was answered by Mrs. St. Philip's maid, who took her into the cozy little reception-room she had so often occupied, and into which Mrs. Godfrey St. Philip came grandly, bonneted and gloved for the street, and with a patronizing, hurried air that was quite new to Grace, who stated her errand with no little constraint, under the sharp, shrewd glint of the lady's eyes.

"For the St. Erasmus Hospital? Let me see your list. Oh—Miss Ruth Tempest, twenty dollars; well, she has a mine of money and not child in the world to support—for that nice of hers is an heiress in her own right."

Grace murmured a reply.

"Miss Tempest was very kind."

"Of course—why shouldn't she be? Here I am working myself to death for our reception, and spending no end of money to make it a success—illy as I feel I can afford it just now. Really, I must beg you to excuse me, as I have to drive to the dressmaker's to see about the girls' costumes."

Grace felt a little thrill of desperation as Mrs. St. Philip gathered her elegant train in her daintily-kidled hand.

"But if you will give me only a trifle, madam; every little helps—a tenth of the price of a dress you will wear—"

Mrs. St. Philip's eyes glittered so sharply, so angrily, that Grace actually shivered.

"Don't add impertinence to your obtrusiveness, I beg. Good-morning."

And Grace walked out, her cheeks flaming no less than if the insult had been personal.

"Thank Heaven, there is but one place more, and if Ruth Grandison falls so far short of all that is noble and true, I shall never, never trust any one again—but dear, queer, sensible aunt Ruth."

Her heart was beating more forcibly than even the importance of the case warranted, as she went timidly to the quiet side-door of the "great house," *par excellence*, of Baldwinsville, and inquired of the sedate, respectful servant in livery, if Miss Ruth could be seen.

She was shown into the magnificent parlors, and given the very chair that Mr. Harry Grandison had offered her the last time she had been there—when he had looked into her eyes with a quick, ardent glance that had thrived her from head to foot, and that, as she remembered now, made her wonder if by any possible good fortune she should meet him and thus have the opportunity of enjoying an uninterrupted look at him.

Aunt Ruth had not been very far from the truth when she had said Grace cared more for Mr. Harry Grandison's opinion of the toilet she should wear to the Centennial Tea-party and Reception than for Miss Ruth Grandison's; and Gracie knew in her heart of hearts, as she sat waiting in the darkened room of Harry Grandison's home, that if she only could once be convinced that Mr. Grandison was not the selfish, extravagant gentleman of leisure she had sometimes thought him, if she only knew he was not attempting one of his elegant, gracious flirtations with her—she would be so glad, so—so—

Miss Grandison's muslin skirts made a soft